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THE LIFE AND WORK OF
GEORG ERNST CHRISTIAN FERDINAND SIEVERS

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Historical Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Sacred Theology

by
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INTRODUCTION

1947 marks the end of the first one-hundred years of the existence of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. It is always interesting and instructive to stop briefly at such milestones and look back into history. How was it possible that the Missouri Synod could grow into the large and influential Lutheran body that it is from such humble beginnings it had in Chicago in April 1847?

Many and varied are the reasons for its spectacular growth during its first one-hundred years, both at home and in the foreign field. The Missouri Synod today has stations in India, China, Africa, the Philippines, and in many other countries outside of the borders of the United States. It is the purpose of this paper to find out by what process or development the Missouri Synod began to do its work among people of other tongues. When one pages through the old issues of the Lutheraner or Synodal Berichte, he certainly is not swept away by the wave of enthusiasm that the members of Synod expressed in favor of doing mission work.

It seems that if it had not been for the incessant appeals and continual urgings of one of the leaders in Synod, the Missouri Synod would lag still farther behind the sects in its foreign mission work. Not too much is

known about the man, except that he was constantly urging Synod to preach the Gospel to the heathen throughout all his life. Very often his appeals fell on deaf ears, but this only incited him to present still stronger appeals to the clergy and laity.

He finally achieved his lifelong goal when the Missouri Synod re-organized and enlarged the Board for Foreign Missions and urged that board to begin mission work in Japan. This man, to whom belongs the credit of starting mission work outside of the United States, was the Rev. Ferdinand Sievers.



G.E.C.F. Sievers

1816-1893

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY LIFE OF FERDINAND SIEVERS

"Ceterum censeo, Carthaginem esse delendam." With these words Cato closed his usual speech in the Roman Senate. The Rev. Joseph Schmidt, formerly of Saginaw, Michigan and later Director of the Fort Wayne Concordia College, wrote in the biography of G.E.C.F. Sievers that Sievers was just as bent on doing mission work as Cicero was bent on destroying Carthage.

Georg Ernst Christian Ferdinand Sievers¹ was born on May 18, 1816 in the town of Lueneburg, Hannover. His father, a town official, was Heinrich Siegesmund Friedrich Sievers, and his mother Eleanora Florentina Lisette nee Vorries. Baby Ferdinand was baptized on June 26th. He received his early training in a private school in Lueneburg.

Ferdinand was orphaned at an early age, his mother having died in 1822, and his father in 1823. The seven brothers and sisters had to live with various relatives. To see his brothers and sisters drive off in carts, one after another, to live with relatives, almost broke Ferdinand's heart. But the close relation between the brothers and sisters was never interrupted. It was Ferdinand's lot to be moved to Hannover,

1. All information on this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, is from the biography of Sievers by Joseph Schmidt. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 64 ff.

where he found a home with an uncle. He had a few Pfennige in his pocket, but he promptly gave them to the rest of the children. This trait of liberality was evident throughout all his life. His uncle, with whom he lived, was the Rev. Philip Sievers, pastor at the Kreuz Kirche in Hannover. The uncle took very good care of Ferdinand's physical needs, but not of his spiritual needs, since he was a rationalist. The state-controlled church was at a low ebb in Germany at this time because of the rationalism which swept through it. The rationalists attempted to prove the Christian doctrines with logic. Since certain doctrines could not be proved with logic, they were dropped. It was under such circumstances that Ferdinand Sievers grew up.

In Hannover Ferdinand attended the Gymnasium, called the Lyceum, from April 1822² to May 1835. After that he attended the University of Goettingen, where he studied theology until 1838, the year in which the Saxon Immigration took place. Although he was an ambitious student, he did not get much out of his theological training because his teachers were rationalists.

On September 26, 1838 he passed his examen praeivum before the Consistory of Hannover. Since there was a surplus of theological candidates in Germany at this time, the graduates did not always receive a call right after graduation, but were given

2. The report of Sievers' work at this school shows that he was a diligent student, since his work was graded sehr gut and recht gut. Joseph Schmidt in his biographical sketch in the Lutheraner states that Sievers entered the school in April 1823. The former report, however, states that he entered in 1822. This report, with the seal of the Lyceum of Hannover, is found in the archives of Concordia Historical Institute (hereafter abbreviated C.H.I.).

tutorages in the homes of the well-to-do. Such a position Sievers accepted with a government official, Schroeder in Amelungsborn, Herzogthum Braunschweig from the fall of 1838 to April 1842. Since Sievers was not satisfied with his theological training he continued his studies and attended the University of Berlin from May until August 1842, and the University of Halle from September 1842 to March 1843. Anti-rationalists such as Hengstenberg and Tholuck were instrumental in helping Sievers come to faith in his Savior at this time. After he left the University of Halle he accepted a tutorage with Bergrath Friedrich Koch, Bergrath being a title to denote an expert in mining operations. Sievers stayed with Bergrath Koch until October 1846. During this time he met the Rev. Mr. Jahns of Foehrste, who further helped his growing faith, though later Sievers remarked that he owed his deep Lutheran faith to Dr. C.F.W. Walther. On the 24th of April he passed his tentamen theologicum before the Consistory of Hannover.

Sievers heard of Wyneken's famous "Appeal" for help in America which made it a matter of conscience to young theological candidates who were not serving a congregation to leave Germany and fill the need for pastors in America. Sievers was influenced by this urgent call and planned to immigrate to America. However, he was not able to leave immediately since he had been persuaded by a friend, Superintendent Steinmetz in Holdorf, to assist the tuberculean Pastor Schlote in Husum near Nienberg. While there, under date of June 1, 1847 Sievers wrote to Loehe that 2,500 souls were in his care

and that his work was growing by leaps and bounds, and "I felt that the Lord used me to feed individual souls. This experience humbled me very much and tried me whether I preached to others while I myself was not acceptable."³ Statements such as these show the great spirituality Sievers already possessed in his formative years.

A typhoid fever epidemic spread over most of Germany during this time. It also came into the parsonage at Husum. Sievers was afflicted with it so that he could not fulfill his tasks for seven weeks. When Pastor Schlote died shortly before Christmas in 1846, the congregation wanted Sievers to stay as its pastor. They even sent a delegation to the king to have Sievers stay, but the king did not get to see the delegation. The result was that Sievers with his great missionary zeal was saved for America.

Sievers had already discussed immigration to America with Pfarrer Loehe in Neudettelsau, who had previously publicized Wyneken's "Appeal." When Loehe chose him as the man to head a new immigration to America, Sievers considered himself incapable of the task. However, upon Loehe's insistence, he accepted.

On April 27, 1847 Sievers was ordained by the Consistory to serve a North American congregation, but not with the power to administer the Sacraments. Shortly thereafter Loehe asked

3. A copy of this letter is in the C.H.I. archives.

him to serve a group of colonists immigrating to the Saginaw Valley in America. Loehe had at first planned to put Candidate E.A. Brauer in charge of the Saginaw colonists, but since Sievers had already been ordained, he was chosen. On August 13 Sievers met E.A. Brauer and J.H. Pinkepank at Bremen to prepare for the immigration. On August 15 the other immigrants met at Loehe's home. Most of the immigrants came from Rosstall in Bavaria. When they arrived in Bremen, Sievers, who had preceded them, told them that the ship "Caroline" on which they had been scheduled to sail had just left and consequently they would have to wait four weeks for the next ship. Sievers asked the congregation for permission to proceed with Brauer on the "Florian." His request was granted.⁴ They left Bremerhafen on the "Florian," which was commanded by Captain Poppe, on August 20. After he had reached New York Sievers wrote Loehe that his departure had been somewhat painful for him, but that through it many of his dear ones grew more conscious of their Christian duty to do mission work. He also mentioned that leaving his former congregation was difficult for him, but that he had seen a spiritual growth during the year of his stay there, which made him very happy. His two brothers, one a preacher in Heemsen near Nieburgh, and the other a lawyer in Hannover, saw him off. He wrote, "My brothers departed, one on the 19th, the other on the 20th, and with this parting the last cord that held me to Germany was broken." Soon after

4. F.F. Trinklein, Rueckblick auf die ersten fuenfzig Jahre des Bestehens der evangelisch-lutherischen St. Pauls-Gemeinde U.A.K. zu Frankenlust, Michigan, im auftrage der Gemeinde zur halbhundert-jaehrigen Jubelfeier. p. 7 ff.

the ship left the sailors had to cast anchor because there was a great calm and so the ship first left the North Sea on the 22nd.⁵

Loeche in his Kirchliche Mittheilungen announced that Sievers had just left Hannover, Germany.⁶ The long voyage across the Atlantic is described by Brauer in his diary.⁷ Sievers had arranged for the group to travel in steerage at the request of Loeche, who wanted his candidates to travel with their people. When they came aboard ship and inquired where their quarters were they were shown a four-cornered opening. They entered it and found a room without windows, benches, or tables, but full of provisions such as flour and herring, and with it all an indescribable stench. Brauer wrote in his diary that only those who have traveled on an immigrant ship know what such a stench is like. A lattice work separated them from the cursing and swearing crowd. The food was abominable on board ship, and it was served under extremely filthy conditions. They had to eat what Brauer described as "a piece of unbelievably salty meat." Services were held on board ship by Sievers, whom Brauer described as "a talented, quiet man, but of a penetrating character." Brauer further said that "Sievers is very helpful to all people; he helps the sick with the most menial tasks; he comforts the down-hearted, and prays with those who are ill. I thank God that he is on the

5. Letter written by Sievers to Loeche Oct. 18, 1847.
Copy in C.H.I. archives.

6. Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und ueber Nord-Amerika
Herausgegeben von Wilhelm Loeche, Pfarrer in Neuendettelsau, und
Johann Friedrich Wucherer, Pfarrer in Noerdlingen, 1847, No. 9,
Col. 72. (Hereafter referred to as Kirchliche Mittheilungen.)

7. Albert Brauer, Lebensbild des weiland ehrwuerdigen
Pastor Ernst August Brauer, p. 22 ff.

ship; I would not have been able to inaugurate and hold the services with such power and fearlessness so regularly. Even for the morning and evening services he wore the gown, chanted the liturgy, and we, Pinkepank and I, responded." Sievers wrote that they held three services on Sunday.⁸ The number of listeners varied. Sievers even held a Catechism examination on board the ship. He wore his gown for the occasion and walked among the people who were lounging on deck. The passengers were so surprised that they answered his questions as best they could. The second Sunday when he tried it, however, all who were able scrambled up to the top deck so that he had only the lame and the bedridden left to question.

The journey took 55 days. They sighted their first land on October 13. From New York Sievers wrote Loehe:

"We thank the Lord that I have arrived at that place where I am supposed to labor. My heart rejoices to think of that moment when I shall be deemed worthy when the Lord will give me my own congregation where I shall preach the Word of the Cross, and to administer the Sacraments...O, if only the dear Lord who has led me so wonderfully up till now will not withdraw His grace from me so that I may become a true worker; if He will only fire my sluggish spirit so that I may labor and toil for His honor!"⁹

His prayer was heard, as is evidenced by the great zeal with which he worked in later years.

When the group arrived in New York Sievers contacted the Rev. T.J. Brohm, pastor of Trinity Church, New York, who handed him a letter from Pastor F.A. Craemer.¹⁰ In this letter Craemer

8. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe Oct. 18, 1847. Copy in C.H.I. archives.

9. Ibid.

10. Craemer had been sent to Michigan by Loehe. Here he had organized the colony of Frankenmuth in 1845 in order to do mission work among the Indians.

indicated his plan to organize a colony on the Tittipiwassee River, since he thought this was the best place to do mission work among the Indians who traveled a great deal on this river. Although Craemer thought it better for him to go to Fort Wayne, Sievers hoped to remain in Frankenmuth until his immigrants would arrive. He left New York on October 18 for Buffalo. Brauer and Pinkepank remained here. Presumably Sievers traveled from New York to Albany, from Albany via railroad to Buffalo, from Buffalo to Detroit on Lake Erie, and from Detroit to Frankenmuth via Lake Huron.

The immigrants whom he had left behind in Bremen reached New York a few days after Sievers did, but few of this group reached Frankenlust. Many of them settled in Monroe, Michigan, some went to Wisconsin, and the rest stayed in Frankenmuth. Loehe's plan of colonizing Frankenlust at this time did not materialize. Sievers remained in Frankenmuth at the home of Pastor Craemer from November until the middle of June, assisting Craemer and serving a few farmers several miles west of Saginaw City.¹¹ Loehe reported in his Kirchliche Mittheilungen in the fall of 1847 that German immigrants were settling in Saginaw and that he hoped these immigrants would organize a congregation soon, and that they were already contemplating to build a church. Sievers was not only serving this congregation spiritually, but also bought a few city

11. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 7 ff.

lots for the future settlers.¹²

When Sievers came to the Saginaw Valley both Frankenmuth and Frankentrost had already been established by Pfarrer Loehe, Frankenmuth in July 1845, served by Pastor F.A. Craemer, and Frankentrost a few months before Sievers' arrival in 1847, served by Pastor J.H.P. Graebner. It had been Loehe's plan to found a new colony under Sievers, called Frankenlust. Loehe had also originally planned to have these colonies serve as a focal point of mission work among the Indians. Concerning Frankenmuth, Loehe wrote that the colony was not organized in the interest of colonization, but in the interest of heathen missions. These earlier plans, however, soon had to be revised, since the number of immigrants to America was rapidly increasing. Because these immigrants received little or no guidance they would settle in isolated places, and thus would lose contact with their Lutheran heritage. In order to prevent this loss and to use the power of the clergy to the best advantage, the immigrants were directed by Loehe into certain channels. Rev. J.H.P. Graebner carried such a plan into action when Frankentrost was founded. For this same reason Loehe directed the immigrants to settle in one place; namely, Frankenlust. The land for the colony was bought with the colonization fund which Loehe had collected from interested friends. When the first tract of land had been bought with this fund, it was to be re-sold, lot by lot, to immigrating Lutherans. Then the entire amount was to be repaid and shifted to a new colonization area. Each colony was to

12. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1848, No. 11 & 12, Col. 85.

have a Lutheran pastor at its head.¹³ Ferdinand Sievers, whom Loehe termed "a man who already showed practical ability" (practische Tuechtigkeit) was put at the head of the proposed Frankenlust colony.

13. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1848 No. 11 & 12, col. 84.

CHAPTER II

PASTOR AND PIONEER

In the November-December issue of Kirchliche Mittheilungen, 1848, Loehe reported that the Michigan colonies were connected more closely with the Canadians than with United States citizens. On the basis of Morse's Geography (Edition 1845) Loehe wrote that Michigan is in the center of the American lakes, and better suited for trade than inland cities. In 1810 the population was 5,000, which grew to 300,000 in 1847. In order to attract his immigrants to this country, he advertised it as being very well suited for farming, the soil being especially adapted to raising wheat, corn, sheep, and cattle. He further tried to make the land sound appealing by mentioning that the Saginaw River was one of the largest in the United States, that the Saginaw Bay formed a beautiful harbor, and that Saginaw County had 100 miles of River Coast. This was very alluring in those days, since transportation and trade were dependent upon good water routes. The land was being sold at \$1.25 per acre. In lower Saginaw the immigrants had the opportunity to buy and sell their wares. Here saw mills were located, from which lumber was sent as far as Chicago, Buffalo, and New York. The river routes, he reported, connect Saginaw with New York and Chicago. Household goods and heavy articles could be transported to Saginaw more cheaply by

water than by land. The inhabitants were easterners, Europeans, English, Scotts, and Germans, who were confessedly Lutheran. Four-hundred Lutherans had come in the last two years, showing how immigrants were attracted to the land. Oak, maple, ash, butternut, walnut, and pine trees were there in abundance. Loehe further reported that the land was easily cleared. He mentioned that a man named Schaefer had been posted in Bremen since Easter 1848 to help the immigrants.¹ The enthusiastic Loehe, as is evidenced by the above report, was very active in promoting colonization in the Saginaw Valley. However, he was not only active in colonizing the Saginaw Valley, but was also deeply interested in promoting the cause of Lutheranism in America. By 1847 he had sent 24 missionaries to assist the Lutheran pastors already in America in gathering the German settlers into congregations.

The first winter Sievers spent in America he assisted Pastor Craemer and did pioneer work in Saginaw. When Craemer came to America in 1845, he had temporarily stayed in Saginaw before Frankenmuth was settled, and consequently had started services there. And so it happened that Craemer conducted services here even after he moved to Frankenmuth. In 1847 Saginaw had been very sparsely settled, as the election of that year shows, when only 200 votes were cast. The inhabitants also had very little communication with the outside world. Sievers was occupied with assisting Craemer

1. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1848, No. 11 & 12, Col. 87-93.

that first winter, and by Easter of 1848 Loehe had written him that a new group of colonists were organizing in Germany, who were planning to arrive in Saginaw by June of that year. Loehe had asked Sievers to choose a good tract of land for these new immigrants.² Sievers had hoped to receive the news of the arrival of the immigrants as soon as they reached New York, so that he might meet them in Detroit, but he received no such news.

One winter day Sievers, with compass in hand, went out to look at the land on the Tittibawassee which Craemer had chosen as the site for the new colony, though it had not yet been purchased. The land appeared to be very suitable for farming. When Loehe had sent 500 gulden, equal to \$2,000, Sievers made another visit to the section, accompanied by a few men from Frankenmuth. To their disappointment, they found that the soil was too swampy and wet, totally unsuited for colonization. But Sievers did not give up hope, so he made a third visit, accompanied by Frankenmuth farmers. The third visit convinced him that it was impossible to locate a new colony here.³ Since this section proved to be unsuitable, he made another trip of exploration, this time north of Saginaw; eleven miles from Saginaw he found what he was looking for. The newly discovered section was on the forks of the Squaquaning River. Here he bought 600 acres.

2. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 79.

3. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe June 27, 1848, copy of which is in C.H.I. archives.

Though it seemed a bit marshy at first, yet as soon as it was drained it seemed like the Garden of Eden. The soil was very fertile, which justified Sievers' choice. There were no roads leading to the section, so the Squaquaning was used as the highway. As soon as he had bought the land he had to divide it into sections for his people. Wearing high boots and equipped with crude instruments for measuring, he tramped through the land and measured off the sections, followed by blood-thirsty hoardes of mosquitoes.⁴ Sievers wrote Loehe⁵ that the possibilities for doing mission work among the Indians were not as good at this section as they would have been at the location Craemer chose, because the Methodists with their revival meetings were very active in this area.

Since the first group of immigrants sent out by Loehe to colonize Frankenlust never got there, a second group was organized. This second group of immigrants destined for Frankenlust was gathered by Andreas Goetz in Neudettelsau. They came to Nuernberg on April 10, 1848, and from there proceeded to Colmbach via train. From Colmbach they traveled on foot to Plauen, a day's journey. From thence they journeyed via train to Bremen, where they arrived on April 15th. On the 18th they set sail on the "Regina." Their journey was not a happy one, since the storm broke

4. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 79.

5. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe June 27, 1848, copy of which is in C.H.I. archives.

off all three masts. They finally arrived in New York on June 3rd. From New York they traveled via the Hudson River and Erie Canal to Buffalo. From there they boarded a steamship to Detroit, where the group split. A part of them traveled on one of the Smith vessels to Saginaw; the other group traveled by wagon and reached Flint on the first evening, and Bridgeport on the following day. At Bridgeport the group split again, one meeting Sievers at Dierker's barn and the other going to Frankenmuth. These two groups later joined and with Sievers as their guide went up the Saginaw to look at the lay of the land of the proposed site. On the way they met the other group which had traveled on the Smith's vessel. From there the women and children traveled to Saginaw on the Smith's vessel. The two groups met again on June 21.

On the following day, June 22, the colonists organized a congregation and called Pastor Ferdinand Sievers as their pastor. His call was signed by A. Goetz, A. Kuch, and L. Hachtel. The congregation pledged itself to the Book of Concord 1580, not only inasmuch as, but because it agrees with the Word of God.⁶ It adopted a constitution written by Loehe, which Sievers had brought from Germany. The congregation was also to serve as a political unit, but this soon proved impractical. Services were held according to

6. Theodore Graebner, Church Bells in the Forest, a story of Lutheran pioneer work on the Michigan frontier 1840-1850, p. 53.

Loeche's Agenda.⁷ On June 25th the first services with Holy Communion were held; private confession had been held the previous day.⁸

A transfer of all personnel and property was made on July 4th. A part of the settlers drove the cattle through the forests. Sievers led this group going overland which reached the northern fork of the Squaquaning in the evening. The other group floated down the Saginaw on a scow with a supply of lumber. Because of the scum, slime, and weeds they had to leave the lumber behind and called for it later. The two groups had expected to join in the evening and thus the overland group did not take any food with them. But since the group traveling by scow did not meet the overland group until the following day, they had to go to sleep hungry.⁹ Fourteen days of rain set in, during which time the colonists huddled under the few shelters which they had. As soon as the rain was over, they built other shelters from boards.¹⁰ At first the group gathered every day for prayer, but later only on Mondays and Fridays,¹¹ and on Feast and Apostle Days.¹² The services were held in private homes at first, usually in the home of Mr. Kuch. Every member had to pay 12½¢ to the church treasury on each acre which he bought from the government. This amount, plus the 63 acres donated

7. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 23.

8. Ibid., p. 11 ff.

9. Letter written by Sievers to Loeche Aug. 11, 1848, copy in C.H.I. archives.

10. Under date of Aug. 11, Sievers wrote Loeche, "We are still living in a hut, but after next week, God willing, the first houses will be built." Ibid.

11. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 23.

12. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 79.

by Sievers, provided the congregation with 104 acres of land.¹³

The following days and months were a time of hardship for the young colony. Since Sievers was the only one who had mastered the English language, he had to do all the buying for the colonists. Every pound of coffee, every board, and every nail had to be ordered through him - he was the hand-and-mouth of the colony. He also represented them in court when legal matters arose. Sickness soon overran the colony, during which time Sievers was not only their Seelsorger, but also their physician. The lowness of the land, the closeness of the prairie, the density of the forest, and the newly plowed land were all listed as the causes of the fever among the settlers. Besides that, the unaccustomed labors, the starchy foods, the salt pork, and the hard work of clearing the land all weakened the colonists so that large numbers of them became ill.¹⁴ Sievers, too, became very sick at the beginning of September. The entire colony was struck with typhoid fever, and only two men remained well. One of the strongest men in the congregation died so quickly that Sievers did not even have a chance to visit him. Sievers himself was too ill to bury him, so Pastor Craemer from Frankenmuth had to help out. The physician from Frankenmuth told Sievers that he would have to be moved to Frankenmuth because he was seriously ill.

13. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 23.

14. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 79.

The doctor tried to move him via boat to Frankenmuth, but since he was so unaccustomed to piloting a boat they only reached Saginaw after two days. Here he had to remain because of his extremely poor health. While on his sick bed in Saginaw, Sievers vowed that, should he get better, he would serve the Lord more faithfully than he ever had before. After seven or eight weeks he was finally well enough to resume his duties. However, after visiting Craemer, he suffered a relapse; this time he recovered quite rapidly and was well enough to be installed on October 31st. Another reason why his installation was postponed so long was because Synod had planned to place him in St. Charles, Missouri where terrible conditions existed.¹⁵ "Unierte" preachers had gained control of the St. Charles congregation and many of the families had gone astray and joined heterodox church bodies. Fifty of their group, however, were begging for a Lutheran pastor. Since most of these people were from Hanover, Synod believed Sievers would fit in well among them.¹⁶ But Sievers was very reluctant to enter upon the plan of Synod. His congregation also was unwilling to let him go, but he was willing to accept the call should no other solution present itself. Synod looked around for another man, and chose Candidate Rudolf Lange to fill this important

15. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe Dec. 12, 1848, copy in C.H.I. archives.

16. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe Aug. 11, 1848, copy in C.H.I. archives.

17. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe Dec. 12, 1848.

position.¹⁸ After St. Charles had received a pastor, Sievers was installed in Frankenlust October 31st, 1848 by Pastor August Craemer of Frankenmuth, assisted by Pastor J.H.P. Graebner of Frankentrost.¹⁹

By December 12th three homes were completed in Frankenlust. Sievers lived in the home of Andreas Goetz with three other families. The winter came upon them very suddenly and severely. They had two kitchen stoves in the house, but even these did not keep out the biting frost because of the penetrating winds. The parsonage could not be built that fall because of the fever epidemic and the lack of manpower. Sievers hoped that he would soon be able to buy a horse, so that he would not have to wade through 14 miles of knee-deep water and mud to serve the small congregation at Saginaw.²⁰

At the end of May Sievers traveled to Fort Wayne with Craemer and Baierlein²¹ for the annual convention of the Missouri Synod. They arrived on June 5th, having stopped over in Detroit on Sunday, where they tried in vain to persuade Pastor F. Winkler to accompany them. Of this

18. Julius A. Friedrich, Kurzer Abriss der Geschichte der Gruendung und Entwicklung der evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinden U.A.K. in Saint Charles County, Missouri, Zusammengestellt im Auftrag des Gesamtkomitees fuer die am 23. September 1917 in St. Charles, Mo., abzuhaltende gemeinschaftliche Reformationsjubelfeier. P. 7.

19. Der Lutheraner vol. 5, p. 56

20. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe Dec. 12, 1848.

21. Missionary E.R. Baierlein had been doing work among the Indians in Michigan since 1847.

meeting Sievers wrote, "It really seems as though Winkler feels closer to Grabau and his Synod than to ours." The sessions of the convention began on June 6th, but the brethren from the East, Brohm, Schaller, Wyneken, and Hoyer were absent. Also those from the West reported that they could not be present because of the cholera epidemic and the great fire which had raised havoc in St. Louis. Walther and Fick managed to arrive at the convention on the second day.²² At this convention the Frankenlust congregation was accepted into membership of the Missouri Synod. The congregation numbered 21 souls and 5 pupils which were taught by Sievers.²³ Sievers was greatly edified by meeting the brethren of the Missouri Synod, many of whom he met for the first time at this convention.

In the summer of 1849 the first log church at Frankenlust was built. It was 32 feet long, and 22 feet wide.²⁴ It was dedicated on November 21st. The fall had been very clement so that they progressed well in building the church. The women and children had decorated the church the evening before the dedication with garlands and reeds. The words St. Paulus-Kirche, made of evergreens, were placed above the altar. The name St. Paul was chosen for the congregation

22. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe July 31, 1849. Copy is in C.H.I. archives.

23. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 24 ff.

24. Loehe in his Kirchliche Mittheilungen reported that the church was 28 feet long and 24 feet wide. Kirchliche Mittheilungen 1850, No. 6, Col. 43.

because they always wanted St. Paul as their example in doing mission work among the heathen,²⁵ an example they followed very well. The following clergy were present at the dedication: The Revs. O. Cloeter, A. Craemer, J.H.P. Graebner, Missionary Maier, and Sievers.²⁶

Also in the summer of 1849 Sievers' house was built. It was a sturdy frame house, 34 feet long, 22 feet wide, and 28 feet high. The house had two stories and a basement.²⁷ Sievers' future father-in-law had sent him 350 thaler so that the wish of his bride could be fulfilled to build "ein festes, warmes Haus," a sturdy, warm house. Sievers would rather have lived in a log cabin, for sentimental reasons, but since he had the money he built a house which would last for many years. It is interesting to note that Sievers did not intend to keep this house, but hoped that the congregation would gradually take it over and pay off as the Lord prospered it.²⁸ This plan, however, did not materialize, since Sievers was still the owner when he died in September 1893.

In 1850 a large group of immigrants joined the colony in Frankenmuth. Among these immigrants was Sievers' fiancée, the daughter of his former employer, Bergrath F. Koch. The

25. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op.cit., 1850, No. 6,
Col. 43.

26. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 25

27. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1850, No. 6,
Col. 44.

28. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe July 31, 1849.

plan for the coming of his bride was this: Sievers' brother Gustav was to head a group of immigrants bound for Frankenlust. These were to leave Germany on a sailing vessel. Bergrath Koch, a man with considerable means, would bring his daughter, the future Mrs. Sievers, over on a steamship the following month. The two groups were to meet in New York, and together would come to Frankenlust.²⁹ The group came, totalling about 40 souls, and included in it were Bergrath Koch and his daughter, whom Sievers married that year.

Bergrath Koch, who owned a number of factories and mines in Germany, wanted to provide for his employees should the Revolution of 1848 close down his establishments. He planned to buy a large section of land near Frankenlust where his employees could then settle. Sievers chose the site and bought it with the money provided by Koch. The new colony was called Amelith. Since Koch's factories, however, were not shut down, Amelith was not settled by his employees, but by other German colonists. And so the colony of Amelith originated.³⁰ Bergrath Koch stayed with Sievers for the summer only. The first families came to Amelith in 1851. The initial service

29. Letter written by Sievers to Loehle July 31, 1849.

30. Waldemar H. Lohrmann, Geschichtlicher Ueberblick der Evangelisch-Lutherischen St. Johannes Gemeinde U.A.C. zu Amelith, Michigan, im Auftrag der Gemeinde zur Feier ihres Fuenfundsiebzigjaehrigen Jubilaeums am 19ten Juni, 1927. P. 5.

was held on June 26, 1852, conducted by Pastor Sievers. Sievers held services in Amelith until 1867, when the congregation called its own pastor, the Rev. J.T. Mueller of Lake Ridge, Tenawee County, Michigan. He was installed by Sievers on January 26th, 1868.³¹ During this time Sievers was so swamped with work that he remarked he hardly had time to study his theology.³²

Work in Saginaw previously mentioned was begun by Craemer, but carried on by Sievers. Loche reported that Saginaw was comparable to a "Dorf" in the late forties, but that it was a gathering place for the German immigrants.³³ At first services were held in private homes in the country, later, after February 11, 1849, in private homes in the city.³⁴ Sievers visited these people every two weeks. Sievers was chosen as the man to serve Saginaw, because, as J.H.P. Graebner wrote, "Sievers could best go to Saginaw because he had a horse, and at that time was connected with Loche's Pilgerhaus and had to go to Saginaw often."³⁵ On December 12th, 1848 Sievers wrote to Loche³⁶

31. Der Lutheraner, vol. 24, p. 119

32. Ibid., vol. 51, p. 79

33. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1850, No. 6, Col. 45.

34. H. Speckhard, Gemeindebuch der evangelisch-lutherischen Gemeinde zum heiligen Kreuz U.A.C. zu Saginaw, Michigan, enthaltend der Geschichte der Gemeinde nebst ihren Ordnungen und anderen Zugaben, im Auftrage der Gemeinde zur Feier ihres fuenfzigjaehrigen Bestehens am 30. und 31. Juli 1899, p. 12.

35. J.H.P. Graebner, Die fraenkischen Colonien des Saginaw Thales im Staate Michigan, unpublished manuscript, written about 1890, in possession of Dr. Theo. Graebner, St. Louis, Mo.

36. Copy of letter in C.H.I. archives.

that he hoped to build a church in Saginaw the following spring. On January 29, 1849 the congregation at Saginaw was organized and the name Holy Cross was chosen. Sievers was present at this meeting and strongly urged the congregation to build its own church. He was asked to continue to serve them. Sievers did not accept any salary for his services, but urged them to use the money to construct a church building instead.³⁷ When the time came to call a full-time man, Sievers was called, but the Frankenlust congregation did not want to see him leave. Then in the second meeting of the Saginaw congregation Candidate Ottomar Cloeter was called. Sievers installed him on November 30, 1849³⁸ after he had colloquized Cloeter on the basis of the Formula of Concord in the presence of the entire congregation.³⁹

The Frankenhilf colony was begun in 1850 as a settlement for poor people from Germany. The congregation here was organized by the Rev. John Deindoerfer. The congregation, strangely enough, was under the management of the Bavarian Society for Inner Missions. Deindoerfer joined the Missouri Synod in 1852.

37. Speckhard, op. cit., p. 18.

38. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1850, No. 6, Col. 45.

39. Der Lutheraner vol. 6, p. 71.

For a while Pastor Sievers was in charge of Loeh's colonization, the Pilgerhaus, and the teachers' seminary fund in the Saginaw Valley. His successors were the Rev. G. Grossmann, who taught at the Seminary, and Pastor Deindoerfer.⁴⁰

From August to September in 1852 the cholera epidemic raged in Frankenlust. Sievers took care of his patients day and night, and even in the face of death faithfully served them. His wife often worried when he did not return in a reasonable amount of time.⁴¹ By the end of September Sievers, too, became so sick with gall fever that he was forced to remain in bed. The fever became worse, since he had so overstrained himself during the cholera epidemic. He was at death's door, and even bade farewell to his wife and small son.⁴² After some time, however, he improved and was able to resume his duties.

On January 9, 1853 Pastor Henry Dicke, a graduate of the Fort Wayne seminary, was ordained and installed as Sievers' assistant.⁴³ His assistance was badly needed in Sievers' illness and in the growing work of the congregation and school.⁴⁴ Pastor Dicke became a true and faithful friend of Sievers, and served Frankenlust and Amelith until he was

40. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1853, No. 12, Col. 89.

41. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 80.

42. Ibid.,

43. Ibid., vol. 9, p. 119.

44. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 28.

called to Frankentrost in 1854. He was installed there on February 8, 1854 by Sievers, assisted by Cloeter.⁴⁵ In 1853 the work of the congregation became too much for Sievers, so J.J. Brater was called as teacher to ease his burden.⁴⁶ The colony grew; by 1853 Frankenlust was settled by more than 60 families.⁴⁷

In 1853 the inevitable break with Loehe came. Though Deindoerfer had joined the Missouri Synod in 1852, Grossmann never did. It was an abnormal relation for brothers in the faith who lived so close together not to be members of the same church body. Loehe had disagreed with the Missouri Synod's doctrine of the church and ministry. The issue came to a head. In 1853 Grossmann and Deindoerfer did not attend Synod's convention in Cleveland. President Wyneken visited them, but could not effect a change for the better.⁴⁸ Loehe sadly deplored the rift, and wrote in his Kirchliche Mittheilungen, "They don't need us any more. Our Saginaw Seminary and colonization fund will be shifted."⁴⁹ Grossmann and Deindoerfer left Michigan and settled in Iowa in the fall of 1853.⁵⁰

As soon as the old log church was built the congregation realized that it was only a temporary structure. Plans

45. Der Lutheraner, vol. 10, p. 112.

46. Ibid., vol. 51, p. 80.

47. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1853, No. 8, Col. 61.

48. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 29.

49. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1853, No. 12, Col. 90 ff.

50. George Fritschel, Aus den Tagen der Vaeter, p. 122.

were drawn up six days after the dedication to build a new church. Pastor Martin Stephan drew the plans.⁵¹ Bergrath Koch had previously donated \$100 for the erection of a new church.⁵² The actual building was begun in January 1856. The size of the building was 70 x 30 feet, excluding the choir section. Enough money was contributed so that the church was completed by the end of September. It was dedicated on October 4, 1857.⁵³ Though for some time the inside of the church was not completed, the congregation used it nevertheless. An organ was installed in 1868.⁵⁴

In the spring of 1858 Sievers, who had been put in charge of Loehe's property in the Saginaw Valley, wrote Loehe that he was not able to buy the property, and that he was not able to sell the Pilgerhaus. He also wrote Loehe that he could no longer supply him with any information about the Frankonian Colonies to be published in the Kirchliche Mittheilungen, since the tendenz of that publication was no longer in agreement with the colonies. But he reported nevertheless that Frankenlust had grown rapidly within the last two to three years, and now had 67 voting members and 300 school children. Amelith, still a filial congregation, had 135 souls and 34 voters.⁵⁵

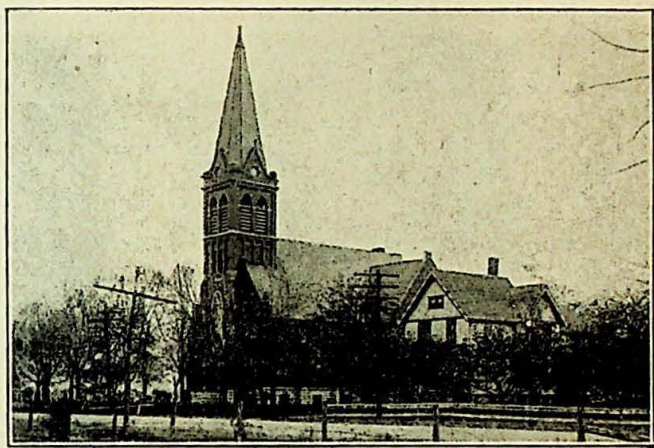
51. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 35.

52. Der Lutheraner, vol. 14, p. 78

53. Ibid.

54. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 35.

55. Kirchliche Mittheilungen 1858, Nos. 5 and 6, Col. 45 ff.



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Sievers had made extensive repairs on the Pilgerhaus. The Saginaw congregation had offered \$1200 for it, but Loche did not want to sell it at that price. Sievers suggested that he wait with the sale until the railroad had been built to Saginaw.⁵⁶ Besides the many other activities and missionary undertakings which Sievers had at this time, he was also trying to best dispose of Loche's property in Saginaw.

Sievers also started services in Bay City, where he was installed on December 5, 1854 by the Rev. O. Cloeter.⁵⁷ Every two weeks Pastor Sievers faithfully held services there until the early sixties, when the congregation called its own pastor, the Rev. J. Himmler. In 1865 the Rev. Mr. Himmler accepted a call into another field, during which vacancy Pastor Sievers again was active in the congregation he helped organize. He served there until 1868 when the Rev. J.H.P. Partenfelder was called,⁵⁸ who was installed on August 2, 1868.⁵⁹

Now a word about the schools at St. Paul's. In the beginning Sievers taught the children, then from 1852 to 1854 Pastor Dicke took over. In 1853 the congregation called a full-time teacher, Mr. J.J. Brater, who stayed until 1866. A new two-story school was built at a cost of \$1075 and dedicated on October 2, 1865. Then J.L. Himmler,

56. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, op. cit., 1861, No. 3, Col. 19 ff.

57. Der Lutheraner, vol. 10, p. 168.

58. Robert Erickson, History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bay and Midland Counties, 1920, p. 7.

59. Der Lutheraner, vol. 25, p. 30.

formerly a teacher in Nuernberg, was called, who came in June 1866. A school was also established for those living in the city on April 16, 1883. Johann Georg Appold was called to teach school there.

From these many and varied activities we can readily see that Sievers was a pastor and pioneer in the true sense of the term. No tasks were too trivial for him, no undertakings too difficult, no assignments too great. Sievers made it his life work to bring the Gospel to men. Nothing prevented him from faithfully accomplishing what he set out to perform. He was instrumental in organizing many congregations besides his own. Aside from those mentioned previously, he was also responsible for helping to organize the congregations at Monitor, Mount Pleasant, and Beaver. Monitor was a daughter congregation settled mostly by former members of Frankenlust. It was located six miles west of Frankenlust. Sievers served this congregation until 1880 when his son Ferdinand was installed there on August 22nd.⁶⁰ In the late summer of 1880 the congregation dedicated its new frame church. Sievers delivered the dedicatory sermon.⁶¹ The work at Beaver was also begun as the result of Sievers' mission activities. He took an active part in all the congregational activities in his community. He was often called upon to take part

⁶⁰. Der Lutheraner, vol. 36, p. 142.

⁶¹. Ibid., p. 182.

in church festivals of neighboring congregations, and he ordained and installed many clergymen during his life. In his later life sickness seldom interrupted his work, though in the spring of 1890 he was confined to his bed for a few weeks. After that he was able to serve his congregation uninterruptedly until the winter of 1893.

Young Synod was that of doing mission work among the heathen. For this purpose a Board for Missions was elected. C. J. A. Pick was elected chairman, August Græsser Secretary, and J. B. Barthel Treasurer.¹ In 1846 at the convention in St. Louis, Missouri this board submitted a plan to establish a mission in Oregon. Emigrants were to settle there, from which point the missionary was to work among the heathen. However, this plan could not be carried out because of the unrest among the Indians. Instead, the new Synod took over the Frankensmith and Bethany Indian stations which had already been established earlier.² The station Frankensmith had been organized by Græsser in 1846 as a result of Locky's endeavor to do mission work among the American Indians. Bethany had been organized by J. B. Barthel, formerly Græsser's assistant, and ordained at Bethany by Græsser on September 4,

1. History Synodical and Regional. Report of the
International Synodical Convention. St. Louis. 1847.
Vol. 1. 1847. p. 10. That year the Synodical and Regional
Reports will be listed as: 1. A. A. Missouri Synod Report, or,
Northern District Report, likewise giving the full title in
German at the number.

2. Missouri State Report. 1846. p. 17 ff.

3. Missouri Synod Report. 1847. p. 11 ff.

CHAPTER III

THE MISSIONARY

When the Missouri Synod was born in Chicago in April 1847 one of the projects which seemed very important to the young Synod was that of doing mission work among the heathen. For this purpose a Board for Missions was elected. C.J.H. Fick was elected chairman, August Craemer secretary, and F.W. Barthel treasurer.¹ In 1848 at the convention in St. Louis, Missouri this board submitted a plan to establish a mission in Oregon. Immigrants were to settle there, from which point the missionary was to work among the heathen.² However, this plan could not be carried out because of the unrest among the Indians. Instead, the new Synod took over the Frankenmuth and Bethany Indian stations which had already been established earlier.³ The station Frankenmuth had been organized by Craemer in 1846 as a result of Loehe's endeavor to do mission work among the American Indians. Bethany had been organized by E.R. Baierlein, formerly Craemer's assistant, and ordained at Bethany by Craemer on September 6,

1. Erster Synodalbericht der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten vom Jahre 1847. P. 16. From henceforth Synodical and District Reports will be listed as, i.e., Missouri Synod Report, or, Northern District Report, without giving the full title in German or the number.

2. Missouri Synod Report, 1848, p. 17 ff.

3. Missouri Synod Report, 1849, p. 11 ff.

1850.⁴ The Missouri Synod took over these two stations officially on June 1, 1849. Pfarrer Loehe and the Collegium of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission at Leipzig, under whose auspices and management the stations had been, promised to keep the missions in mind.⁵ In 1850 Ferdinand Sievers was elected chairman of the Mission Board, an office which he was destined to hold until 1893, Pastor F. Lochner was elected secretary, and Mr. F.W. Barthel remained treasurer.⁶ At the same convention Synod welcomed into its midst two new stations; namely, Sibiwaing, which was served by Missionary J. Auch, and Shiboyank served by Missionary F. Maier. The station at Sibiwaing consisted of 80 acres, a parsonage, and a school. The interpreter was Jacob Graverath. The station at Shiboyank was comprised of 6 acres of land and a church; Jacob Graverath served as interpreter here also.⁷ Both Missionaries Auch and Maier had been former members of the Michigan Synod, and when their stations were handed over to the Missouri Synod, a colloquy was held with them, Sievers representing the Missouri Synod.⁸ However, when Missionary Maier drowned in Saginaw Bay on November

4. Ibid., 1850, p. 11.

5. Ibid., 1849, p. 12 ff.

6. Ibid., 1850, p. 42.

7. Ibid., p. 22.

8. Sievers to Loehe, July 31, 1849.

15, 1850 during a storm,⁹ Missionary Auch took over his station, Shiboyank. Auch worked under great difficulties because of the continued harassing of the Methodists. His interpreter, too, proved unfaithful and had to be dismissed.¹⁰

In 1850 Pastor August Craemer left Frankenmuth to serve as second professor at the college in Fort Wayne. He arrived there on October 24th.¹¹ The station Frankenmuth had to be closed because there was a shortage of manpower and also because there were hardly any Indians left.¹² Pastor C.A.W. Roebbelen was called as Craemer's successor,¹³ to serve the German congregation established in Frankenmuth. The second station to be closed was Sibiwaing because the Indians at that place were not receptive to the Gospel.¹⁴ The German Lutheran congregation there, however, was continued to be served by Auch,¹⁵ who also continued to serve the Indians at Shiboyank, with the assistance of J.E. Roeder.¹⁶ Auch continued to serve these Indians until March 1854 when they proved unfaithful. After this he accepted a call to serve the German Lutherans at Sibiwaing.¹⁷

9. Der Lutheraner, vol. 7, p. 63.

10. Missouri Synod Report, 1852, p. 22.

11. Der Lutheraner, vol. 7, p. 56.

12. Missouri Synod Report, 1851, p. 16.

13. Ibid., p. 7.

14. Ibid., 1853, p. 32.

15. Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, Official Organ of the Concordia Historical Institute. Hereafter referred to as C.H.I. Quarterly. Vol. III, p. 25 ff.

16. Missouri Synod Report, 1853, p. 32.

17. Der Lutheraner, vol. 10, p. 206 ff.

In 1847 Synod's instructions for the chairman of the Mission Board were:

"The chairman of this commission is held responsible not only for supervising the already existing mission stations of Synod, and to visit them, when possible, either personally or through a substitute, but also to devote his attention to the choosing and founding of new stations, when possible through mission colonies. When visiting these stations he should investigate whether the religious instructions are founded upon Luther's Catechism and whether the mission work is carried out from the point of view of the church. With the help of the other members of the Board, he should endeavor to receive from Lutheran mission societies competent missionaries who have bound themselves to the Symbolical Books of our church, who are pure in doctrine and an excellent example in life. It is his responsibility to induce Synod to establish and maintain institutions for preparing missionaries for the heathen. It is his duty to give fatherly advice to the missionaries, both in word and deed. He is held responsible for finding the needs of the individual stations and taking care of them, with the help of the other two officers. He should require quarterly reports from all missionaries."¹⁸

Sievers faithfully tried to carry out the above instructions of Synod. He certainly supervised the existing mission stations well, and very often visited them personally. He selected competent and able men as missionaries, and was very active in giving them aid and mature counsel. It must have been heart-rending for him to see first the Frankenmuth, and then the Sibiwaing station close.

Baierlein had not been well, so an assistant had been suggested for him at the convention held in St. Louis in 1850.¹⁹ He received his temporary assistant in the person

18. Missouri Synod Report, 1847, p. 14-15.

19. Ibid., 1850, p. 23.

of Mr. Eissfeldt.²⁰ By 1852 Ernst Gustav Herman Miessler, sent by the Leipzig Mission Society, was made Baierlein's permanent assistant at Bethany.²¹

It was reported that Bethany station in 1853 consisted of a log church and parsonage, both in one building. An Indian cemetery had also been dedicated. The value of the station was estimated to be \$1100. Baierlein, who had organized and served the station since 1847, now received a call from the Leipzig Mission Society as missionary to India.²² He left for Germany on May 19, 1853, and so Sievers, as chairman of the Mission Board, felt duty bound to move to Bethany with his family. Since the welfare of the Indians and the station was at stake, Sievers did not hesitate to give up his comfortable home for a hut among the Indians. The work of spreading the Gospel was always uppermost in his mind, even though it entailed hardships for himself and his family. During his stay among the Indians from the middle of May to the middle of June, he preached in English, while an interpreter translated the sermons. Missionary Miessler and the devoted Mr. Eissfeldt assisted him.²³ A deep love must have developed between Sievers and the Indians during his stay among them, since

20. Missouri Synod Report, 1851, p. 16.

21. Ibid., 1852, p. 22.

22. Ibid., 1853, p. 32 ff.

23. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 106.

a group of women came in a canoe to visit him at Frankenthal. later on.²⁴ Missionary Miessler was chosen as Baierlein's successor at Bethany. He was installed there on June 26, 1853. Sievers assisted at the installation.²⁵

The Mission Board hired James Gruett as interpreter for Bethany station. According to his contract he was to teach the language for five hours daily, interpret at the evening service, and accompany the missionary one day a week on his visits to the Indians. For these services he received \$13 per month. For all extra services he was paid 75¢ per day or 12¢ an hour. Through the instigation of Sievers, provisions were made whereby 400 acres would be bought from the government, on which the Indians were to settle, and thus avoid being forced by the government to move on the reservations.²⁶

Since things were not going as well as they should have in both Shiboyank and Bethany, mission-minded Sievers was again on the job, doing his utmost to keep the Gospel among his red brethren. Accordingly, on November 4, 1853 after a pastoral conference, he, together with Pastor Cloeter, Missionaries Miessler and Roeder, interpreter Gruett, and Missionary Auch, whom they escorted back to Shiboyank, traveled via horse back in order to investigate that station^t and to check into the possibilities of merging

24. Der Lutheraner, vol. 10, p. 28.

25. Ibid., vol. 9, p. 176.

26. Missouri Synod Report, 1853, p. 32.

the Shiboyank and Bethany stations. They hoped to reach Sibiwaing on that day. They rode through the dense woods, passing through Tuscola and Vassy, and reached a spot 18 miles from Frankenmuth by noon. At the log barn of an English farmer they stopped to eat their lunch. They arrived at Sibiwaing at eight o'clock that evening, and stayed over night at the home of Missionary Auch's father. The next morning they reached Shiboyank. The following Sunday Miessler preached in the morning and Roeder in the afternoon. Sievers was greatly edified by these services, since the congregation sang well the German hymns translated into their language. He hoped that soon they would have their own hymnology. In the evening the party visited the log cabins of the Indians and found them very clean and neat. On the following Monday morning a council was held with the Indians. Missionary Auch opened the meeting, announcing its purpose. Then Sievers presented the proposed plan of uniting the Bethany and Shiboyank stations. He explained that the reasons for this merger were: that in this way the 400 acres of land which Synod had purchased for distribution among the Indians could be better divided, and that Shiboyank was short of women eligible for marriage, while Bethany had a large number of them. At this point one of the young Indian men asked whether they couldn't marry some of the German girls who were living there. Sievers answered that it was up to each individual and not up to the church to make that

decision. The main reason, however, for merging these two stations was to conserve funds and manpower. Next they discussed with the Indians how this merger could be carried out. The Indians were not ready for the decision and wanted to discuss the plan with their families. The group met again in the afternoon. In this session the Indians pointed out that they would greatly welcome the Bethany Indians to join them at Shiboyank because theirs was a good wheat country, had a good harbor in Saginaw Bay, had plenty of game, and was free from the revival meetings of the Methodists who were harassing those at Bethany. It was also pointed out by the Indians that Shiboyank was closer to a good market. Thereupon Sievers told the Indians that the Bethany Indians also had a voice in the matter. It was decided that a few of the Shiboyank Indians should accompany Sievers the following winter on a visit to Bethany in order to discuss the plan with them. After their mission had been accomplished, the clergy left on horse back, reaching Sibiwaing in the evening. They stayed at the vacant mission house where Missionary Auch had lived for five years. Upon investigation, they found that the Sibiwaing Indians were still unreceptive to the Gospel. The following day Sievers returned to Frankenlust.²⁷

The scheduled meeting with the Bethany Indians was held in February 1854. Sievers, Missionary Auch, a member of Sievers' congregation, Pastor Cloeter, and two Indians

27. Der Lutheraner, vol. 10, p. 131 ff.

from Shiboyank journeyed to Bethany on February 1st on two sleds. In a few hours they covered 30 miles and were at the forks of the Tittibawassee. There they spent the night at the home of an English farmer. The next morning they started out early, and traveled on the Pine River for 45 miles. They saw nothing but wilderness all along the river, not even a hunter's cabin. The first 5 or 6 miles of their journey were covered without any mishaps. Farther on, however, the journey became more perilous; the snow lay deeper, and under the snow was water which had accumulated as a result of the thawing snow. At other places they found that the river was not entirely frozen over. It was only the speed of the horses which carried them safely over these treacherous spots. At noon the travelers stopped to rest and warm themselves at a forest fire. The journey became still more dangerous as they moved along, since the ice frequently broke through under the impact of the horses and sleds. At one time Sievers' sled had broken through the ice and when the men tried to lift it out, the sled broke. This slowed down the party still more. In the mean time it was getting colder. In order to gain time they left the sleds behind. While continuing on foot, they noticed many tracks of wolves. They greatly increased their pace because they knew their lives were in danger. With ice chunks frozen to their wet feet and trousers, their bodies thoroughly exhausted, they

reached Bethany at eight o'clock in the evening.

When the group arrived at Bethany they noticed, to their great disappointment, that all the family heads had left for the nearby Methodist town to collect their government subsidy. Through legislation of the Methodists, this subsidy had to be collected in their town.

The following morning the Indians who remained at home welcomed the new arrivals at the mission house with a firm handshake. In the afternoon a school visitation was held, which all the remaining Indians attended. Sievers observed that the school children showed good knowledge of Bible history. The Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed were also recited with ease. Although their arithmetic was poor, in reading they had advanced to such an extent that they could read the New Testament in their own language. Sievers also visited the homes of the Indians.

On Sunday the regular services were held. Miessler preached in the morning and Roeder in the afternoon. Following the afternoon service, a meeting was held to decide which of the two stations, Shiboyank or Bethany, should move. The consensus of opinion was that it would be better for the Shiboyank group to move to Bethany. They agreed that Bethany was a better settlement, though Shiboyank also had its talking points. They thought that the interference of the Methodists would consolidate the Lutheran Indians. Their business over, the group returned

home. Missionary Miessler accompanied them because of the conference which was to be held at Frankentrost.

For the second time Sievers met with the Shiboyank group, who were willing to move to Bethany. However, they requested that the shift take place after April, so that they could finish gathering the maple syrup. In settlement they were allowed \$12 per acre for their cleared land. Because of the successful meeting, Sievers announced in the Lutheraner that the Shiboyank station no longer existed. He was happy about the prospect because it would save Synod money.²⁸

Though Sievers had tried very hard to keep the Gospel with the Indians and had gone through untold hardships to achieve this, he was unsuccessful in part through the unhappy turn of events. An English trader, who happened to visit the Indians at Shiboyank, sowed seeds of mistrust in these Indians. He told them that Sievers and his group were trying to put one over on them in order to gain their own ends. When the trader left, two Indians accompanied him to lower Saginaw and were told the same story there by a second English trader, who would have lost much business if the Indians had moved to Bethany.

The attitude of the Indians towards their spiritual heads changed immediately. One evening when Missionary Auchrang the bells for chapel, only six men and one woman were

28. Der Lutheraner, vol. 10, p. 155.

present. After the service, the chief of the village announced that a council would be held at his house the next day. The situation became worse. Missionary Auch was present at the meeting. All the admonition of the missionary was to no avail. The Indians were positive that their spiritual leaders had betrayed and cheated them. On the following Sunday no one came to the service. After a number of weeks Miessler and interpreter Gruett of Bethany came to assist Auch, but even their presence improved conditions none. When it was apparent that nothing could be done to regain these fallen Indians, the station was closed. The property was valued at \$380 and consisted of 40 acres of land, of which 18 were cleared, a frame house, a log church, and a log barn. The mission property was sold and the proceeds were used by Missionary Miessler in buying 800 acres for the Bethany Indians. Missionary Auch then accepted a call to serve the German Lutherans in Sibiwaing.²⁹ He was installed on March 4, 1855 after the congregation had completed its church building. Sievers, assisted by Cloeter, installed him.³⁰

The Indians at Bethany deplored the deflection of the Shiboyank Indians and promised their missionary, Miessler, who was assisted by J.F. Roeder, that henceforth they would attend more fervently to spiritual matters than they had before. Conditions in Bethany were improving. The Indians

29. Der Lutheraner, vol. 10, p. 206 ff.

30. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 135.

had requested for some time that Sievers visit them. Upon their invitation, Sievers set out for Bethany on September 11, 1854. He left Frankenlust around noon, and arrived at Saginaw about two o'clock that afternoon. From there he was accompanied by Pastor Cloeter. Sievers had taken his horse along to carry the provisions for the journey. At ten o'clock in the evening they reached the forks of the Tittibawassee, which they crossed in their canoe, Sievers leading the horse by its bridle from the canoe. They stayed over night at a hospitable farmer's house. Since they had a long journey ahead of them, Sievers had hoped for an early start, but as guests they had to observe the regular routine of their host and had breakfast as late as seven o'clock! Soon after breakfast they were on their way. Traveling through the wilderness slowed them down more than they had expected, and by sundown they had not yet reached the station. Sievers then rode ahead on his horse to announce their coming, so that a meeting could be held the following morning. The following day a school visitation was held, and Sievers found the children to be very interested pupils. A meeting of the congregation was held that evening, which proved to Sievers that Bethany was growing spiritually. The Indians were urged, during the course of this meeting, to give up the wild life of hunting and fishing and to devote themselves more fully to farming. Having completed their mission, Sievers and Cloeter left early the next morning. They reached Saginaw on the evening

of that same day. Sievers reported in Der Lutheraner that the Bethany Indians were very happy about the prospect of receiving their own parcel of land.³¹

On October 11, 1855 Sievers and Pastor H. Fick made another visit to Bethany. They arrived at the forks of the Tittibawassee on the first night, where they stayed over night. The next morning they crossed the Tittibawassee on a scow, also crossed the Chippewa River, and stayed on the left bank of the Pine River. In the virgin pine forest they lost their way. It grew dark. They permitted the horses to follow their own course. The horses, on their own, stumbled and pressed through the dense undergrowth, the low branches at times nearly throwing the riders off their horses. When the two travelers had almost given up hope of reaching Bethany that night, they suddenly noticed that the horses had led them to the wide and oft-traveled path leading to Bethany. They reached their destination at nine o'clock in the evening. They spent the first day at Bethany in recuperating from their strenuous journey and in discussions with Missionary Miessler, who reported that the Indians had become more self-supporting, thus saving Synod money. Miessler also told them about the government's plan of moving all the Indians on a reservation in Isabella County. Each Indian family was to receive

31. Der Lutheraner, vol. 11, p. 140 ff.

80 acres. This plan of the government appealed to the Indians. Miessler believed the Methodists to be the instigators of the proposed plan, since they were putting forth every effort to win the Indians away from Lutheranism. After having inspected the station, Sievers and Cloeter returned to their homes.

After this tour of inspection, Sievers was convinced that more manpower should be added to the Indian stations, so that the work could be spread out among other Indian settlements also. For this reason he made an appeal in Der Lutheraner that young gifted boys be trained as Indian missionaries. His plan was to send them to Bethany where they would live among the Indians with Miessler's twelve year-old brother and thus learn the language and habits of the people. He also appealed for an adult theologian who would be Miessler's assistant, and help in teaching school,³² since Assistant Roeder had accepted a call to Canada. In 1857 two Indian boys, Paulus and Philip, were studying for the ministry in Fort Wayne. Paulus was not trustworthy and left the college.³³ Philip had possibilities, but was forced to discontinue his studies because of sickness. He returned to the home of his parents.³⁴

Already in December of 1853 Sievers reported in the Lutheraner that the government was formulating plans to

32. Ibid., vol. 12, p. 133 ff.

33. Ibid., vol. 16, p. 115.

34. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 36 ff.

move all the Indians who were living west of the Mississippi and who did not own any land to a reservation. As chairman of the Mission Board, he proposed the plan that 30-40 acres be bought, with money from the mission treasury, for each Lutheran Indian family. Each family was to repay as much as possible every year until they had paid for all of their land. He urged all the Lutherans to give liberally to the mission treasury so that this plan could be put into effect as soon as possible.³⁵ Sievers was afraid that the Lutheran Indians would be moved out of Synod's jurisdiction. Later on the government promised to give each Indian family a farm of 80 acres in Isabella County, about 30 miles north of Bethany.

On February 15, 1856 Sievers, accompanied by Cloeter, made another visit to Bethany. In the evening they stayed at their usual lodging place at the forks of the Tittibawassee. They reached Bethany at noon on the following day and found the conditions among the Indians very poor. The shortage of wood for fuel had compelled many of the Indians to move deeper into the woods. Others had grown cold towards the Gospel, and had even called upon their witch doctors in times of sickness. Sievers observed during this visit that the Indians follow those whites to whom they feel subject, and that this was the reason why they came to church and confessed Christianity. He also blamed the influence of

35. Ibid., vol. 10, p. 71.

the Methodists for the superficial Christianity of the Indians. He noticed that the white settlers were hemming in the Indians more and more. The Sunday service was visited mostly by women and children. In the afternoon a meeting was held with the Indians, in which Sievers admonished them to remain faithful to the Word of God. Sievers was quite depressed about the spirituality of the Indians after this visit.³⁶ The report to the Lutheraner made by Miessler in 1857 was also quite discouraging.³⁷ Since Miessler's reports of Bethany had been so disheartening, Sievers and Cloeter made another visit to Bethany towards the end of January 1857. Sievers noticed how poorly the services were attended. Hardly any men were present, which made it impossible to even hold a voters' meeting after the service, so it was postponed to Monday morning. When it finally was held only three showed up. Upon the pleadings of a very old widow, Synod decided not to close the station, even though the results would almost have demanded it.³⁸ On July 9th of that same year President Wyneken, former Missionary Auch, and Sievers visited Bethany. Again it seemed as though the Indians had experienced a change of heart. The Sunday services were well attended. When a meeting was held in the afternoon the Indians confessed their shortcomings and promised to do better in

36. Ibid., vol. 12, p. 173.

37. Ibid., vol. 15, p. 3.

38. Ibid., vol. 13, p. 172.

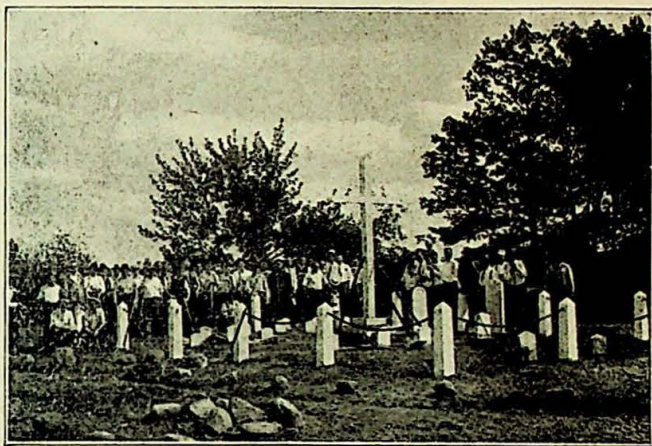
the future.³⁹

At the convention of Synod held at Fort Wayne in 1857 Sievers reported that the outlook of the Bethany station was not very promising. The Indians, he said, were looking for worldly gain, and since the government had offered 80 acres to each family in Isabella County, they were inclined to accept this offer and leave Bethany. However, Sievers also added that should the Indians move to Isabella County, the preaching of the Gospel should also be offered them there. President Wyneken, Sievers, and Auch had accomplished little by their visit to Bethany, though they had given Miessler new hope and confidence. Synod urged that the English language be taught the Indians and that Miessler preach in the Indian language. A teacher was promised to assist Miessler. In the face of all these set-backs, Sievers urged Synod to be thankful to the Lord for still giving them the opportunity to preach the Word of God among the Indians. Secondly, he urged the members of Synod to re-examine themselves whether they had carried out God's will to the best of their ability in serving the Indians.⁴⁰

In the spring of 1859 Sievers and Pastor J.A. Huegli of Detroit, who was secretary of the Mission Board at that time, visited the Bethany station. They were instrumental in arousing the consciences of the Indians, who again

39. Ibid., vol. 14, p. 30 ff.

40. Missouri Synod Report, 1857, p. 60 ff.



Indian Cemetary at
Bethany (St. Louis), Mich.

promised to attend services more faithfully. Another visit was made in July of the same year. It appeared to Sievers that the spiritual conditions of the Indians were improving and that the Indians could be diverted from moving to Isabella County.⁴¹

Nevertheless, the inevitable came and the Indians, prompted by land hunger, moved to Isabella County to the government reservation. The station at Bethany had to be shut down. Upon invitation of his former charges, Miessler was planning to move to Isabella County to serve the Indians there as best he could.⁴² Synod in 1860 had also urged him to move there. The Bethany property was valued at about \$4,000.⁴³ By April 2, 1861 his address was Albany Post Office, Isabella County, Michigan.⁴⁴ Miessler had moved there in February, when he claimed 160 acres from the government upon which he had built a house, 24 x 18 feet. He felt quite lonesome at this new location.⁴⁵ The Isabella County reservation comprised about six townships, and was settled by approximately 800 souls, most of which were Methodists; the only Lutherans were those from Bethany. The Methodists already had a church and three schools.⁴⁶

41. Der Lutheraner, vol. 16, 116.

42. Ibid., vol. 17, p. 95.

43. Missouri Synod Report, 1860, p. 64.

44. Der Lutheraner, vol. 17, p. 136.

45. Ibid., vol. 18, p. 61.

46. Ibid., vol. 18, p. 61.

By March 25, 1861 Miessler was able to report that his Lutheran Indians were quite receptive to the Word of God at the new location. The new station still did not have a church or school building. Services were held in the homes of the Indians. However, a log church was built in the fall of 1861 and a barn the following year.⁴⁷ Since the Indians were living far apart, Miessler hoped that he could get an assistant.⁴⁸ When the station showed some progress by February 1862, Sievers expressed his joy in the Lutheraner.⁴⁹ The station received a set-back because Miessler had been sick most of the summer of 1862. That, plus the wild life of the Indians had made the station quite inactive for some time.⁵⁰ Then came the Civil War. Some of the young braves from Isabella County joined the army. Miessler himself was in danger of being drafted. It is interesting to note that he paid the government \$94 to be exempted from the draft. This amount, collected by various friends, was given him. Even though the future of this re-located station looked dark, Sievers encouraged the readers of the Lutheraner to support the station even more than they had done before. He prayed that the Lord would grant a greater love for

47. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 36 ff.

48. Ibid., vol. 18, p. 77.

49. Ibid., vol. 18, p. 101.

50. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 36 ff.

the poor "Chippeways," so that this love would lead them to salvation.⁵¹

Sievers reported that the progress made at Isabella County by November 1866 was not very encouraging. The Methodists had won over some of the Lutheran Indians and others had been roaming through the forests in search of food, and thus the services were poorly attended. In spite of all these difficulties Sievers was still able to thank the Lord for the mission opportunities. He realized that it is the Lord who gives the increase, and praised Him for the small achievements.⁵² Because of the continual moving about of the Indians, Miessler was not able to establish his own school. The government, however, had asked him to teach in the public school. Here he was permitted to teach the Catechism and Bible history. Sievers again was very happy that although the Indian children could not be reached in any other way, they could be reached thus. Synod looked askance at this arrangement and sent an investigation committee to see whether Miessler could fulfill his duties according to the call under such conditions. It was at the convention of 1866 held at Fort Wayne that Synod discussed closing the Indian station, but Sievers awakened new hope with his zeal and enthusiasm for mission work. His report, based on a deep love for missions and eye witness accounts, averted such a decision. He

51. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 186.

52. Ibid., vol. 23, p. 35 ff.

emphasized the fact that God had placed Synod here and for that reason it dare not close the station when it wanted to, but had to remain until God himself would close the door.⁵³

Though Sievers was able to ward off the closing of the Indian station for a few years, the convention at Milwaukee in 1868 decided to close the station because the Indians had become totally unreceptive by this time and Miessler, through various sicknesses, had not been able to carry on the work.⁵⁴ Attempts were made in 1869 to revive mission work among the Indians, but the attempts were unsuccessful.⁵⁵

At the convention held in 1881 in Fort Wayne a committee consisting of Rev. J.L. Hahn, Messrs. Friedrich Arnold and C. Riedel was appointed to appraise the mission farm.⁵⁶ They reported to the following convention held at St. Louis in 1884 that they had found everything in excellent condition.⁵⁷

At the convention of 1869 the mission property at Bethany and Isabella County was transferred to the trustees of Concordia College, Fort Wayne.⁵⁸ Sievers announced the sale of the mission property at the convention of 1872. He also reported that the amount in the mission treasury

53. Missouri Synod Report, 1866, p. 78 ff.

54. Der Lutheraner, vol. 24, p. 187 ff.

55. Ibid., vol. 28, p. 150

56. Missouri Synod Report, 1881, p. 77.

57. Ibid., 1884, p. 28.

58. Ibid., 1869, p. 101 ff.

at that time was \$5508.21.⁵⁹ Missionary Miessler went to Saginaw where he served Holy Cross as a teacher for some time. Later he left and went to Chicago to study medicine.⁶⁰

So far we have only treated the work among the Indians in Michigan. We have briefly seen how the work was begun and carried out for some time through the faithfulness of the missionaries and through the continual impetus and support offered by Sievers. Now let us turn our attention to the work our Synod did among the Indians in Minnesota. At the Northern District Convention held in May 1856 the district realized the urgency of sending a man into Minnesota to investigate the mission possibilities there. They considered Minnesota their own mission field because it was easier for them to get there and because many of their Lutherans were settling in Minnesota. The district resolved to send a preacher of the district into the territory to investigate the mission possibilities. The choice fell upon the logical man, the mission-minded F. Sievers.⁶¹ His congregation granted him a few months' leave of absence. Accompanied by interpreter Gruett and Missionary Miessler, Pastor Sievers made the arduous journey to La Crosse, Wisconsin, leaving Frankenlust on August 1, 1856. From there he traveled to Minneapolis on foot, a

59. Ibid., 1872, p. 117 ff.

60. Ibid., p. 41.

61. Northern District Report, 1856, p. 23.

distance of 185 miles. On this trip to Crow Wing and St. Columbo, he and his companions established contact with the Chippewas. Missionary Miessler remained for a while among the Chippewas, in order to acquaint himself with the work done by the Episcopal Church at St. Columbo, about 180 miles north of St. Paul. Because of the difficulty in getting a guide, Miessler and Gruett decided to go to Rabbit Lake. After a very dangerous journey in which interpreter Gruett almost lost his sight, they finally reached the Indian settlement there.

While Missionary Miessler and Gruett visited the Indians in Minnesota, Sievers visited the German Lutheran settlements alone. From St. Columbo he went to St. Cloud, about 70 miles north of St. Paul, where he had planned to open a preaching station for the German Lutherans, but he was disappointed since the people were largely Americans and Roman Catholic Germans. The following day he visited Anthony Falls and Minneapolis, which were nine miles north of St. Paul at that time. He found no prospects in Anthony Falls. Under date of August 21, 1856 Sievers wrote Walther from Anthony Falls that he had just returned from a visit to the upper Mississippi region where he had found a very large mission field. He had traveled with Miessler and Gruett via stage coach from St. Paul to Crow Wing, which was the last post office in upper Mississippi and as Sievers termed it, the end of civilization. The chief Indian settlement was Mill Lake, 30 miles from Crow Wing, in the

direction of Lake Superior. About 500 Chippewas were living there, speaking the same language as those in Bethany. Since they were on a reservation, Sievers believed they had a wonderful opportunity to become farmers. Both Miessler and Sievers thought this would be a promising station for mission work among the Indians. He requested Walther to get one or two young men to be trained as missionaries among the Indians, but it was also his idea that an experienced man should be sent into the Mill Lake region. He hoped that Miessler would first train these men in Bethany and then, as an experienced man, take over this station in Mill Lake.⁶²

From Mill Lake Sievers went to Minneapolis, where he found a small group of Lutherans who greeted his coming with great joy. The group consisted of two families and a young bachelor. Sievers spent some time with these people, instructing them in the Creeds and the Augsburg Confession. Upon their Lutheran confession Sievers decided to hold a service for the German Lutherans in Anthony Falls and Minneapolis. The service was held on the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, August 24, 1856,⁶³ but the attendance was very small, consisting of only eight men and women. The service was held in the auditorium of the land office in Minnesota. After they were examined

62. Der Lutheraner, vol. 13, p. 14.

63. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 27.

in the Confessions, Holy Communion was celebrated. In the afternoon a second service was held, which was attended by the same group. Sievers also baptized a child at this service. Because some of the men had told him of German Lutherans living 16 miles out of town, he decided to visit these people also. He arrived there at eight o'clock in the evening and still held an evening service. Four families and a few young people were present. Through proper investigation he found that most of the people living here were infested with unionism and rationalism. A few of them, however, wanted to join the church and Sievers hoped that they could be served as a filial congregation of Minneapolis. He then returned to Minneapolis where a true Lutheran congregation was organized. This new congregation wanted to call a pastor right away and Sievers promised that he would do his best to get one for them. After he had accomplished his mission there, he went to St. Paul. At St. Paul he found a congregation which was served by Pastor F.W. Wier, a former member of the Buffalo Synod, who had come to Minnesota during the middle of July 1855.⁶⁴ Because Wier could not support himself in the ministry in St. Paul, he had bought a 160-acre farm seven miles out of St. Paul near Inver Grove. Here he served the Lutheran settlers and promised to visit the St. Paul Lutherans every

64. C.H.I. Quarterly, vol. II, p. 80.

two weeks. Sievers suggested to the congregation in St. Paul that they call a full-time man from the Missouri Synod, since they were being served so irregularly by Wier.

From St. Paul Sievers traveled to Shakopee, a settlement predominantly German. He made a few calls there, but noticed that Pastor Wier had already been active, so he moved on to Chaska and Carver Counties where he found some Lutherans. From there he proceeded to Henderson. Wier had previously been asked to serve this settlement, but since it was too far from his home, he had never been there. At this town Sievers spent a very restless night at the inn because the dance music kept him awake. He left the following morning, September 7th, and stopped at a German settlement called Prairie Mound. Upon the request of two people, one a former member of Pastor C. Sallmann's congregation near Chicago, and the other a man who wanted to have his child baptized, Sievers was persuaded to hold a service there the following Sunday.⁶⁵ The service was fairly well attended; 20 to 30 families were present. After the service a meeting was called to decide whether they should organize a congregation. Sievers examined them on the basis of the Augsburg Confession and the Creeds, and found them orthodox. A constitution was

65. Der Lutheraner, vol. 13, p. 109 ff.

drawn up, which was to be considered carefully and adopted later on. Sievers was convinced that a pastor should be sent to Prairie Mound soon, since the Methodists were trying to gain the Lutherans. After baptizing a few children, he went to St. Peter's on foot. He also established contact with a man from La Seur. At both of these places he left instructions on organizing a Lutheran congregation. Then, partly by wagon and partly on foot, he traveled to Faribault. Since he did not reach it the first day, he stayed over night at the log house of a settler. After floundering about in the wilderness, he finally reached Faribault through the aid of his compass. Faribault was only a small town at that time, having been settled about a year and a half earlier. He quickly visited the settlers there and left for Cannon Falls that same day. Because he was unable to reach it the first day, he stayed at the home of an American family, who told him of German settlers near there. He was on his way to visit these before sunrise the next morning, and found that many of them had come from Cooper's Grove near Chicago, and were well indoctrinated. Because their group was too small at present, they were unable to call their own pastor. Sievers urged them to join the congregation of a neighboring pastor. After that he visited Cannon Falls, and reached Red Wing, 25 miles from Cannon Falls. He had been at Red Wing four weeks earlier, and so the people were expecting him this time.

The Methodists were also reported to be quite active here. On the following Sunday, September 15th, a service and voters' meeting were held. Sievers found that a majority of the voters were willing to organize a congregation. This congregation today is affiliated with the Wisconsin Synod.⁶⁶ Thus having completed his mission, Sievers returned with a joyful heart. Though being tossed about on Lake Pepin and Lake Huron by storms, he arrived home safely on September 25th.⁶⁷ The Missouri Synod did not have the available manpower to send to these different stations visited by Sievers. However, F. Kahmeyer was sent to the Germans in Carver County where he stayed for two years and did laborious pioneer work. In 1851 John Horst was called to Minneapolis and J.P. Rupprecht to Prairie Mound. Two years later A.E. Winter was sent there as traveling missionary, establishing his headquarters at Minneapolis. In 1862 he became pastor at Prairie Mound. H.F.C. Grupe was sent to Town Hart, Winona County.⁶⁸

Sievers had planned to have Miessler train one or two men in Bethany for mission work among the Indians and later have him organize a station at Rabbit Lake. His plan, however, did not materialize. Instead, Pastor Cloeter from Saginaw was called in January 1857 after he had volunteered

66. In Commemoration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Faribault, published by Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Faribault, Minnesota, p. 6. Hereafter referred to as Trinity, Faribault.

67. Der Lutheraner, vol. 13, p. 116 ff.

68. C.H.I. Quarterly, vol. II, p. 108 ff.

to organize that station.⁶⁹ He left his former charge on May 28, 1857, accompanied by Missionary Miessler and Henry Craemer.⁷⁰ They arrived at Crow Wing on June 12th. Thirty miles north of Crow Wing Cloeter established himself at a point near the present Mission Lakes. The station was called Gabitaweegama.⁷¹ At the convention of 1857 Sievers announced this new station in Minnesota and strongly urged the people to support this new venture.⁷² Before long, however, the same obstacles were noticed here as at Bethany. The Indians were given to drunkenness and sexual sins. Cloeter did not believe it profitable to try to civilize the Indians in the fashion of the whites. Instead, it was his idea to permit them to keep their customs and habits and to bring the Gospel to them under those circumstances.⁷³ Two men from Milwaukee, Carl Duclos and Kluge, were sent to assist Cloeter in his work, and arrived at the end of June 1858. This relieved Cloeter from his routine duties and gave him the opportunity to visit the outlying Indian settlements.⁷⁴ The services of these two men, however, were not available to Cloeter very long. Kluge did not turn out as expected⁷⁵ and Carl Duclos married Cloeter's

69. Der Lutheraner, vol. 13, p. 175.

70. He was the son of Prof. F.A. Craemer of Concordia College, Fort Wayne, and was a valuable assistant, since he had learned the Indian language when his father was Indian missionary in Frankenmuth.

71. Der Lutheraner, vol. 15, p. 36 ff.

72. Missouri Synod Report, 1857, p. 63 ff.

73. Der Lutheraner, vol. 14, p. 30.

74. Ibid., vol. 15, p. 37.

75. Missouri Synod Report, 1860, p. 64 ff.

sister-in-law and also left him.⁷⁶ Henry Craemer had also been called away by his father to continue his studies at Fort Wayne.⁷⁷ This left Cloeter all alone in his vast field, and since he was not able to use the Indian language, progress almost came to a stand-still. Cloeter then undertook the study of the difficult language with more ambition than ever before. By 1860 the property of this station consisted of 160 acres, of which a few were cleared, and a few small log buildings. The progress during the early years was almost nil, and Sievers reported at the convention of 1860 that had the same amount of money been spent on doing mission work among the Germans, much more would have been accomplished. But this did not convince him that the station should be closed. Instead, he again urged thankfulness to the Lord for permitting them to spread the Gospel among the heathen. Synod considered closing the station at this time, but left the final decision up to Cloeter.⁷⁸ Cloeter, however, felt duty bound to continue his work, though he had received various calls to German Lutheran congregations.⁷⁹ In the summer of 1861 an educated Indian named "Turtle" came to teach Cloeter the Indian language.⁸⁰

*Henry
Craemer*

76. Der Lutheraner, vol. 16, p. 99.

77. Ibid., p. 100.

78. Missouri Synod Report, 1860, p. 64 ff.

79. Der Lutheraner, vol. 18, p. 29 ff.

80. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 38 ff.

A great Indian uprising came in the summer of 1862. The hostile Indians went through the countryside plundering and murdering wherever they went. Cloeter and his family, fortunately, were spared through the friendliness of an Indian chief. They had to leave their home at the station and sought refuge in Fort Ripley. When Sievers heard this report he immediately went to see Miessler at Isabella County. To his joy, he found the Indians quite peaceful.⁸¹ The station Gabitaweegama was totally destroyed by the Indians. Even in the face of these dangers, Cloeter was not willing to give up his work among the Indians. The following winter Cloeter rented a house in Crow Wing and began to study the language in earnest again.⁸² In spite of the deplorable conditions at the station, Sievers continuously appealed for support through prayer and contributions. When Cloeter had lost all of his personal possessions through the Indian uprising, Sievers did not hesitate to bring these needs to the attention of the readers of the Lutheraner. He pointed out that these missionaries were doing the work of each individual member of Synod, and thus the welfare of the missionary was the members' concern as much as that of the Mission Board chairman. So Sievers started a fund to collect monies

81. Ibid., vol. 19, p. 20.

82. Ibid., vol. 20, p. 27.

to be sent to Cloeter.⁸³

In 1866 Sievers made a second visit to the Minnesota territory, especially to visit the Indian station, where he gave Cloeter all the moral support possible⁸⁴ when he found that the Indians were deteriorating fast.⁸⁵ From Crow Wing Cloeter established contact with the Indians at Moose Water Lake in 1867. But here again the government was making provisions to move the Indians on to a reservation. By December 10th the government had already begun to move the Indians to Red River and to White Oak Point. Since it was impossible to do mission work among them under such conditions, C.F.W. Walther, together with the Mission Board and Missionary Cloeter, discussed the future of the station at the convention held in Milwaukee in 1868 and decided to discontinue mission work among the Indians in Minnesota. Cloeter was urged to accept a call to a German Lutheran congregation near there.⁸⁶ When he received a call to St. Peter's congregation at Zionsberg, later called Afton, in Washington County, Minnesota, he accepted. He succeeded Pastor John Karrer, and was installed on August 9, 1868.⁸⁷

The Mission Board remained in existence even though Synod had no mission station of its own for a number of

83. Ibid., p. 53.

84. Ibid., vol. 51, p. 106.

85. Ibid., vol. 23, p. 33 ff.

86. Ibid., vol. 24, p. 187 ff.

87. Missouri Synod Report, 1869, p. 46.

years. During that time they sent in contributions to the Hermannsburg and Leipzig Mission Societies, and when Missionary Baierlein, who was now doing mission work in India, requested books and periodicals for his evangelists there, Sievers took care of his request and sent him the materials.⁸⁸ He also sent reports to the Lutheraner on Baierlein's activities.⁸⁹

When in 1872 the convention did not have enough time to hear the report of the Mission Board⁹⁰ Sievers published the report in the Lutheraner. Among other things, he again urged that the work among the Indians should be resumed. He also suggested that a Mission Director and Assistant be appointed, who were to keep their eyes open for mission opportunities. He also suggested that these men be given the authority to take steps in training young people for foreign mission work.⁹¹

Sievers was constantly urging Synod to do mission work, as all the subsequent reports of Synod show. At the convention of 1874 he again pleaded with Synod to appoint a Director of Missions. Synod's only answer was that it did not have a man suitable for such a position at that time. He also appealed to Synod to re-open the work among the Indians, and suggested that Philip, the

88. Der Lutheraner, vol. 28, p. 114 ff.

89. Cfr. ibid., vol. 25, p. 178.

90. Missouri Synod Report, 1872, p. 110.

91. Der Lutheraner, vol. 28, p. 150.

former Indian student at Fort Wayne, be chosen to do mission work, or at least serve as interpreter to a missionary. Synod resolved that Sievers approach Philip to see whether he would teach school among his tribe. If he would be willing, Sievers was to hire him and pay him out of the mission treasury. The responsibility was also placed upon Sievers to look around for a man who would be suitable to do mission work among the Indians. The Northern and Northwestern Districts were urged to do what they could for the cause since the Indian stations had been located there.⁹² Apparently nothing became of these proposals since they are not mentioned again.

In the Lutheraner of July 1877 Sievers cogently appealed to Synod to begin foreign mission work. He admonished the readers for praying "Thy kingdom come" and not spending any effort in helping it come. He re-iterated that it was each Christian's duty to preach God's Word to the heathen. The fact that Synod was doing mission work among the German Lutherans in the country was no reason why they should neglect the Indians, the Negroes, the Chinese, the Japanese, the East Indians, and the Australians. He pointed out that God had put the heathen on their doorstep, and that it was their God-given duty to work among them also. Sievers' method of persuading Synod

92. Missouri Synod Report, 1874, p. 72 ff.

to do mission work was to discuss the subject at the District Conventions, where the brethren felt free to discuss the matter and voice their opinions. Then at the Delegate Synod something definite could be produced and worked on.

Sievers thought it best for Synod to have its own mission project again and aired his views on his pet subject - the appointment of a Director of Missions, who was to choose a new mission field. This Director, Sievers thought, should be a theologian who would devote all of his time to the work of missions, so that he could travel about, visit and discuss the opening of new fields with local pastors, choose the fields, and put a man on the job. He was also to help train future missionaries, help prepare them, and assist in establishing them. In this manner Sievers hoped that a whole network of stations would be spread over the country. The Mission Board was to be under the direction of Synod and supply the needs of home and foreign mission work. Sievers suggested various locations for the Mission Board, such as some central point; a central location among the Negroes; the western states; the Mission Farm in Michigan; or it could have its headquarters at the place where it was needed most. Sievers believed that there were no available missionaries because Synod had no definite stations at which to place them, but if a Director were elected, he would find places in need of missionaries and send them there. Since many of the

young candidates were not receiving calls upon graduation, these could be used by the Director of Missions as he saw fit.⁹³ This plan of Sievers, however, was not carried out until a few months before his death in 1893.

Sievers took every opportunity to encourage missions. When M.H. Fedderson was called as traveling missionary at Petoskey, Michigan, Sievers announced it in the Lutheraner and made an appeal for support.⁹⁴

As a member of the Saginaw Special Conference, Sievers again stressed the Christian's duty to do mission work among the heathen. At the same time he offered suggestions how this could be done. These pleas and suggestions were brought before the Michigan District Convention, meeting at Grand Rapids from June 20-26, 1883. The District resolved that these pleas and suggestions be brought before the next Delegate Convention.⁹⁵ This was done at the following convention held in St. Louis from May 7-17, 1884. Sievers was highly complimented at this convention for his continued interest in missions, and so Synod asked him to find ways and means to do mission work among the heathen. The memorials from the Michigan District to open a mission field again and from the New York Pastoral Conference to begin mission work among the Armenians were not acted upon.

93. Der Lutheraner, vol. 33, p. 97.

94. Ibid., vol. 37, p. 111.

95. Michigan District Report, 1883, p. 86.

But Synod replied to all this:

"As much as we are happy from the bottom of our heart that in our midst the love for missions among the heathen is still alive and warm, as for work which the Lord has commanded to His Christians, yet, on the other hand, even though we would gladly undertake this work immediately, yet we must express our regrets, that, with all the mission work which God has given us at this time, we cannot see how we could dare, under these circumstances, to take on some new mission field, for the opening of which we have not been given any sign from God.⁹⁶

This attitude of Synod did not satisfy Sievers. At the Michigan District Convention of 1886, held at Monroe from June 24-30, Sievers again presented an appeal to the District to begin mission work. The District again resolved to send this appeal to the Delegate Convention.⁹⁷ At the Delegate Convention of Synod held at Fort Wayne in May 1887, the delegates of the Michigan District urgently pleaded that Synod resume mission work among the Indians and begin work among the heathen. In its overture to Synod the Board stated:

"It is our sacred duty, without a doubt, to provide with all our might for our neglected brethren of the faith in this country as also for the Negroes and Jews of this country, by sending missionaries among them; but by fulfilling this obligation faithfully, we are not in the least released from our duty to have pity on

96. Missouri Synod Report, 1884, p. 63, translation of Dr. Roy A. Suelflow in his "The History of the Missouri Synod During the Second Twenty-five Years of Its Existence 1872-1897," p. 336. Th.D. thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1946.

97. Michigan District Report, 1886, p. 70.

the Indians of this country and on far-removed heathen.

The neglected Christians among us, and also the Jews and Negroes who live among us, have daily opportunities to hear the Gospel of Christ and thereby to be led to salvation, for they live with Christians and share the same language with them; and if they do not take advantage of these opportunities, it is largely their own fault. But the Indians and other far-removed heathen are separated from the blessings of Christian influence for so long as the Christians do not bring them the preaching of the Gospel, then the main fault lies with us, we, who neglect them and pass by their misery without doing something about it.

The Lord has already opened to us the door to the Indians and the distant heathen. For in former years already we had conducted not without result the missions among the Indians in Michigan and Minnesota, and we would only have to open these again.

But the inaccessibleness to the distant heathen in Asia, Africa, and Australia, which had largely been responsible for a lack of intercourse with Christian peoples, has, thanks be to God, been broken down and removed. The difficulty of learning their language is constantly being conquered to a greater extent, and the Bible has been translated into all the main heathen tongues; yes, every day more is being done for the completion of such Bible translations.

It is not to be feared that there is a danger that we will be interfering with the territories of the other mission societies if we do mission work in heathen lands, since, for example, China, Japan, India, and Central Africa offer such vast extents of territory that a clash with the various mission societies could easily be avoided.

We cannot agree with the statement that we should wait with the re-opening of the mission among the heathen because God has not yet given us the men who possess the necessary gifts and abilities for this. But much rather we should look about us once and see whether God has not already long ago given us men like this, whose mission abilities have only been unknown or at least remained unused. And furthermore we should diligently and earnestly pray to God, that He would more and more give and awaken in us such abilities which are necessary for carrying on such mission work.

It is therefore not sufficient that occasionally some candidate or pastor among us is encouraged to do mission work and sent out for this purpose; but what we need is a special mission institute in which

we would have a special mission director who is unincumbered by some other office, so that he could devote all his efforts to his work and, assisted by one or more other teachers, could prepare mission students or could add the finishing touch in the preparation for mission work among the heathen to young men who had already received their theological training in our own or some other seminary.

Many hearts in Synod, both young and old, join us when we pray: 'Lord, grant us a fruitful mission among those heathen who are near as also among those who are distant, and permit such mission work to flourish for the glory of Thy Name and for the conversion of many heathen and enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Thank God that at this time a fine mission spirit is going through Christianity in general and a powerful mission spirit is beginning to permeate Christianity. Heathen missions are no longer a matter of custom alone, but Christians in many localities now recognize it as their God-given duty to preach the Gospel to all living creatures. And we Lutherans, who by the grace of God have been entrusted with the pure doctrine, want only to stand by and watch the great mission projects which are now being carried on all over, giving us an excuse for not participating, that we have done enough already with our home, Negro, and Jewish missions, so that we could not undertake the heathen mission also? May this be far from us!

And on the other hand, it is certain that if we begin mission work among the heathen on the basis of Christ's command and promise, we will still not lose ground in our inner mission work, but we will have gain.

Therefore we should confidently observe the command of our Savior: 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creatures.' The words 'all the world' says Luther in his Ascension Day sermon in his postille, does not mean one piece, or two, but all and everywhere, where there are people...

From the report of the synodical treasurer we see, finally, that on April 1, 1887, there are \$13,468.00 in the treasury for heathen missions, for which purposes a balance of \$79.27 is also being turned over to the board, so that the total which is now available for missions among the heathen is about \$13,548.00.

What a gratifying and encouraging sign of God is it not, that He has poured such a large treasure into our laps, so that we should confidently strive for the carrying on of missions among the heathen."⁹⁸

⁹⁸. Missouri Synod Report, 1887, p. 63 ff, translated by R.A. Suelflow's "Second Twenty-five Years of Missouri Synod", p. 336.

In spite of these overwhelming arguments, Synod took no extraordinary steps in organizing a mission. Synod resolved that the Mission Board take preliminary steps toward founding a mission and to keep its eyes open for places ripe with the harvest. It suggested Ceylon as a possibility since German Lutherans had settled there. The Board was also delegated to look for a suitable man to head the mission work and to pick out young men who could enter this work. Synod resolved to take \$4000 out of the mission treasury to be given to the Board of Colored Missionsto start a station in New Orleans.⁹⁹

When Sievers noticed that all these stirring and incessant appeals made to Synod accomplished such insignificant results, he must have felt like a man trying to push an elephant over on its side. But he never gave up hope or ambition in trying to get a mission station started. At the Delegate Convention in 1890 held at Milwaukee, Wisconsin the Mission Board brought up the old subject again; namely, that Synod should appoint a Mission Director with the concomitant duties, and suggested suitable persons for this work. But the committee which had been appointed to examine the Board's report and to make recommendations to Synod stated:

"As glorious as it would be if Synod could have its own heathen mission, nevertheless we are not in a

99. Missouri Synod Report, 1887, p. 66 ff.

position to recommend such to Synod at this time, since enormous expenses would be involved." 100

The only action Synod took was to accept the report of the Mission Board and appoint a committee to audit the books of the mission treasury. One certainly is not impressed by the missionary zeal expressed at these conventions. Sievers, too, was not impressed by the action taken by Synod. As a result he urged missions anew in the pages of the Lutheraner. In his article he re-counted the blessings Synod had received from God. By the grace of God, he said, Synod had grown to such a large body. He pointed out that it was the duty of such a body to share its blessings of the Gospel with the heathen. This duty was not being fulfilled by doing home mission work alone. As possible foreign fields, he mentioned India, China, Japan, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. He showed how the Fathers were interested in mission work at the organization of Synod by organizing a Board for Heathen Missions. Though he granted that home missions were important, he stressed that it was their duty, nevertheless, to do mission work among the heathen in foreign countries. He admonished those who asked in a tremulous voice where Synod could possibly get the means to train so many missionaries and support them, to trust in God for help and support. In his appeal, however, he warned against neglecting the home field altogether

100. Missouri Synod Report, 1890, p. 66, translated by R.A. Suelflow's "Second Twenty-five Years of Missouri Synod," p. 340.

in favor of foreign fields, but entreated Synod to be active in both. In conclusion he reminded his readers not to consider success by numbers because God's kingdom can not be measured by numbers.¹⁰¹

Ferdinand Sievers, Sr. and Jr., appealed to the Saginaw Special Conference for foreign mission work. This appeal, which was reprinted in the Lutheraner, again demonstrates Sievers' sincere concern and persistent effort to preach the Gospel to the heathen. The theme of their appeal was, "Is our time and situation suited to begin mission work among the heathen?" The answer in Sievers' and his son's mind was an emphatic "yes," but there were a few misgivings which had to be answered first: 1) Our home mission requires our constant attention, but that is no reason why we should not begin mission work among the heathen. If it were true that we should limit our projects only as far as humanly possible, then we should not have begun work among the Negroes in our country, but the harder a Christian works, the more power God will give him to carry out his tasks. If we only want to do as much as is in us, we are showing a weak faith. Proof of this fact is found in the congregations. The one which does not begin new projects is soon going backwards. Giving does not lead to bankruptcy, but leads to wealth. 2) Then the question is

101. Der Lutheraner, vol. 46, p. 198.

raised whether there are any among us who have the gifts to do mission work. This argument also does not hold water when we consider that our Synod has been more richly blessed than any other religious body, and we as a true Lutheran group have greater gifts to do mission work than any other. 3) Though it seems that Synod can not afford to do mission work, we must remember that Synod has the money, but that we as a body do not give as much as we could, especially not when we compare ourselves to other small denominations. 4) The argument that we could accomplish more by using the same amount of men and money on the home field rather than on the foreign field also falls away. Though apparently that is true, we must keep in mind that God does not reason that way. He concluded his appeal with a stimulating plea to do the will of God, to work and give towards foreign missions.¹⁰²

For the third time Sievers worked through the Michigan District in order to bring the plea for mission work before Synod. Though he was not present at the Michigan District Convention held at Detroit in May 1892, he brought his resolutions before the convention in writing. The convention resolved to present Sievers' plea to the Delegate Synod to be held in 1893.¹⁰³

The Delegate Synod met in St. Louis from April 26 to May 6, 1893. Finally the Rock of Gibraltar was moved and

102. Ibid., vol. 47, p. 86.

103. Michigan District Report, 1892, p. 64.

the convention duly decided that now was the time to start mission work - through many signs the Lord had shown that the door was now open to do mission work. The delegates were convinced that the Lord had not only opened the door, but had also furnished the means to begin mission work. Every District had requested that mission work be begun. The mission treasury at this time showed a balance of \$11,560.75. It was resolved that mission work be started among the heathen in a foreign country. Japan was considered the logical field for beginning such work for the following reasons: 1) It was now open for trade. 2) A process was going on which left the old and sought the European civilization. 3) Nine-tenths of the Japanese were still heathen. 4) Although many Christians were doing mission work here, there were none working in Japan who were preaching the entire Gospel. It was resolved that mission work be started in Japan. Ways and means of doing this work were also discussed. It was resolved that students who had mastered the language should start schools in Japan, which were in great demand there at that time. Besides the Word of God, they were also to teach the curriculum of the secular schools. The old subject of the Mission Director was again brought up. Sievers was suggested as the logical man to fill this position. Synod resolved that the office of Mission Director be created. This Director was to serve

for three years and the Mission Board was to consist of ten men, five of which were to be St. Louis residents, two of them from the faculty of Concordia Seminary, one pastor, and two laymen. These five men were to constitute a standing sub-committee. The remaining five members could be chosen from the outside field. These were to sense the wishes of Synod and correspond with the Director and the sub-committee. This Board was to meet annually. It was resolved that the election of the Mission Director take place in the same manner as the election of professors by the Electoral Board. It was further resolved that the Director be the executive in all things, and that all details be left to the discretion of the Mission Board. The election of the Mission Board then took place.¹⁰⁴ Those elected were Prof. F. Pieper, Prof. A. Graebner, Rev. O. Hanser, Mr. L. Volkening, Mr. L. Lange, Sr., Rev. F. Sievers, Sr., Rev. A.L. Frey, Rev. C.M. Zorn, Rev. C.F.W. Sapper, and Prof. F. Zucker.¹⁰⁵

Before the Board could take any active steps, the investigator, G.E.C.F. Sievers and Mr. Louis Lange, a prominent layman from St. Louis, two members of the board, had died. In place of them, Pastor Joseph Schmidt and Mr. Robert Leonhardt were chosen. Pastor J. Wefel was called as Director of Missions, but he did not accept. Before the call was given to Pastor F. Sievers and before the plan adopted by the Delegate Synod of 1893 could be carried

104. Missouri Synod Report, 1893, p. 82 ff.

105. Ibid., 1893, p. 141.

into effect, through a turn in events the door to India was opened wide, and thus our Synod started a foreign mission there.

One can hardly imagine how happy Sievers must have been that finally, after all these years when he was trying to budge Synod to take an active part in foreign missions, it resolved to begin mission work in Japan. His pioneer efforts in convincing Synod of its obligation to do mission work were finally rewarded. How sad it is to note that Sievers, who had spent his whole life on this project, saw its fulfillment only four months before his death! His biographer, Joseph Schmidt, relates that Sievers was so happy about the resolutions of Synod that he wrote 36 letters about them. The 77th anniversary of his birthday followed shortly after the convention. On this anniversary Sievers remarked that Synod's recent decisions came as a wonderful birthday present.¹⁰⁶

During all this time, Sievers was not only extremely active in pushing foreign missions in Synod, but he was also active in home mission work. He made numerous trips to investigate mission possibilities in the country. The first one of these he undertook in the spring of 1850. He had been asked by President Walther to investigate the possibilities of organizing a congregation in Cincinnati, Ohio. The journey took him five days. He traveled via

106. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 106.

Saginaw to Frankentrost, Frankenmuth, Flint, Pontiac, Detroit, Monroe, Toledo, Miami, Bellevue, and then via the Sankusky-Cincinnati train to Cincinnati. After investigating, he found Pastor Theodore Wiechmann, a member of the Indianapolis Synod, very active here. Pastor Wiechmann proved to be an orthodox Lutheran who later joined our Synod. Having completed his mission, Sievers hoped to be back in Frankenlust by Easter.¹⁰⁷

After the convention held in Milwaukee in 1851, Sievers journeyed to Marquette County in northern Wisconsin to investigate mission possibilities there. Little is known about the results of this journey.¹⁰⁸

Besides many other mission journeys, Sievers made one into northern Michigan in 1865. On this trip he was accompanied by his two sons, Friedrich and Bernhard, and students Biewend and Partenfelder. He made this journey because of a call for help from the Lutherans in and near Traverse City. From Frankenlust they traveled via Midland, Bethany, and Big Rapids, a distance of 100 miles, a majority of which was traveled by foot. They arrived on a Sunday at five o'clock in the afternoon. After a messenger had been sent around, services were held at eight o'clock in the evening. On the following Monday a meeting was held, at which the Lutherans present

107. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, 1850, col. 46.

108. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 87.

organized the St. James Congregation. On Tuesday a morning and afternoon service were held. On Wednesday he and his companions, burdened down with books and provisions, started out for Traverse City, a distance of 90 miles. They followed a narrow Indian path along which they saw no living creature, but only a few deer and wolf tracks. The journey became quite tiresome because they had to cross so many rivers and cut their way through dense cedar swamps. After struggling their way through the wilderness for two days, they realized that they had lost their way. Their food supply was exhausted. Even though they had a compass with them, it helped them none to find the right path. They had to rely on berries for food. By Saturday morning they had eaten their last bread. Then perchance they came back to the place where they had discarded their boot grease to lighten their pack. They searched for it in order to satisfy their appetite, but in vain. Then they realized, after having proceeded in the wrong direction for two miles, that they were lost for the second time. Sievers' two young sons were completely exhausted by this time and could not travel any farther. Biewend and Partenfelder then made a last attempt to find the right path, or at least the home of a settler. When they returned in half an hour they found Sievers and his two sons singing funeral hymns. Fortunately Biewend and Partenfelder found the house of a settler, and the group was saved. The following day, which was on a Sunday, Sievers held a morning and a vesper service.

Since he was determined to reach Traverse City, he started out again on Monday morning. From here they had taken a guide with them, who had directed them within 20 miles of their destination, but to their dismay they found a large lake which they were unable to cross, and only 20 miles from Traverse City! The lake probably was Mitchell Lake. Hurriedly they turned back since their food supply was running low. Though thwarted this time, Sievers was determined to reach Traverse City. He made another attempt. This time he traveled to Grand Rapids and thence to Milwaukee, and in this roundabout way reached Traverse City. He also visited Leland, Carp River, and Northport, but since he had lost so much time in getting there, he was not able to remain very long.¹⁰⁹ However, he sowed the seeds for an orthodox congregation. Pastor J. Bundenthal carried out the work later on.¹¹⁰

In 1866 Sievers made a mission trip to Gutenberg, Iowa, presumably at the time when he visited Cloeter and the Indian station in Minnesota. The congregation in Iowa had asked for an orthodox pastor. When Sievers arrived there, he found out that it was a very small group who had made this request. All he could do under the circumstances was to advise this small group to leave the congregation of which they were members and

109. Ibid., p. 88

110. Ibid., vol. 32, p. 91

to join the Missouri Synod congregation at Dubuque.¹¹¹

Besides the mission trips into various parts of the country, Sievers also kept in close touch with the different missionaries that Synod had in the field. One of these traveling preachers reported that he had received over 100 letters written by Sievers within a few years. In these letters Sievers gave him tried and mature advice and inquired intelligently concerning his work; when prospects looked dark and gloomy Sievers comforted the missionaries.¹¹²

Sievers' many mission reports are evidence of his sincere enthusiasm for missions and proof that he instilled this enthusiasm in others also. The biographer Schmidt said of him:

"It probably does not require much skill to create an interest and enthusiasm for a mission that can show good progress and results, but it certainly requires a burning zeal to keep alive in others an interest in, and the willingness to make sacrifices for missions which can not show any gains, but only hopeless results. It was Sievers' lot to give reports of the latter sort. Even though others were discouraged, he never was discouraged, and even was able to encourage others in the face of difficulties."¹¹³

It is interesting to note that his sons, especially Friedrich and Ferdinand, inherited this ardent zeal for missions from their father, as the later issues of the Lutheraner show.

Certainly the words of Cato may well be compared to the persistent efforts made by Sievers to start foreign mission

111. Ibid., vol. 51, p. 106.

112. Ibid., p. 114.

113. Ibid., p. 106.

work. Even on his death bed Sievers prayed:

"Lord, have mercy on the heathen, and look after them, so that they may know Thee as their Savior and may be saved with us. Especially give me grace and lead me out of this vale of tears into eternal life. Amen."114

114. Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEMBER OF SYNOD

"Indeed, he was a true friend, a true brother who showed his love in actions in both secular and spiritual matters. A Christian brother's heart beat in his breast, and thus he could laugh with the happy, and weep with the sad," states Joseph Schmidt in the biography of Sievers.¹

It was true Christian love which prompted Sievers to take such an interest, first of all in his own congregation, and then in the congregations of his brethren in the ministry. This deep Christian love moved him to write so many letters of admonition and correction. When on his second trip to Minnesota he found a man who had drifted from the church, Sievers gave unselfishly of his time and talked things over with him far into the night. It was his deep love for the individual soul which impelled him to do that. In the work of his own congregation also no task was too menial for him. His great love for bringing souls to Christ made him the active missionary that he was. He was not satisfied to work in his own congregation alone, but organized many daughter congregations all around Frankenlust. Whenever there was sorrow or joy in a brother's house, a letter from Sievers would be there to lighten the sorrow and share the joy. When Pastor H. Fick was forced to go to Germany because of his health, Sievers did not hesitate to urge the congregations of Synod to send him

1. Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 114.

financial support.²

When the Rev. J.H.P. Partenfelder celebrated the anniversary of his ordination, Sievers, a month before his death, wrote him a congratulatory letter, reminding him of the time when they lost their way on their mission journey to Traverse City, with the words, "Nec aspera terrent." And likewise, when Joseph Schmidt celebrated his anniversary of ordination a week later, Sievers again sent him an anniversary greeting in the words, "Per noctem ad sidera."

Though Sievers was not in America at the time when the Missouri Synod was organized, he nevertheless took the first chance he had to become a member of this new Lutheran body. Though he could not be present, he was elected an advisory member of Synod in 1848.³ However, when Synod met at Fort Wayne in 1849, he was present and became a voting member.⁴ In a letter he wrote to Loehe a little over a month after the convention, he expressed his great joy over being a member of Synod and said that he was edified by the convention and felt confident that the young Synod would be an asset to the Lutheran church in America. In this group he felt at home, where not only the outward structure, but the bond of faith held the members together. He also was

2. Ibid., vol. 15, p. 167.

3. Missouri Synod Report, 1848, p. 4.

4. Ibid., 1849, p. 1.

convinced that the church government of the Missouri Synod was the best. He expressed his views freely to Loehe, though differing from him. Among other things, he stated that outside of the Word of God there is no higher authority in Synod, and for that reason resolutions which are not based on Scripture are not binding upon the individual congregation. On the other hand, he pointed out the dangers of the episcopal form of government, as exemplified by Stephan's deflection.⁵

He was a faithful member of Synod all his life, never hesitating to sacrifice his time and energy, supporting its programs, and generally setting forth a good example.

The Northern District in 1871 asked him, together with others, to prepare the agenda for the following convention.⁶ For the Northern District Convention of 1859 he prepared and presented a paper on brotherly love. Besides this one, he also prepared other doctrinal papers for conventions. When Pastor C.A.W. Roebbelen, formerly of Frankenmuth, had died in Germany, it was Sievers who wrote his biography, which was printed in the Lutheraner.⁷

When his former congregation at Amelith had a special problem, Sievers was called in by the congregation and

5. Sievers to Loehe July 31, 1849.

6. Northern District Report, 1871, p. 29.

7. Der Lutheraner, vol. 26, p. 3.

pastor to solve it. This he did very successfully.⁸

He also took a sincere interest in the Widow and Orphan Fund, and when it happened to be low at one time, he urged the people to send in contributions for this purpose.⁹

Sievers was always very anxious to be present at all the conferences and conventions, and only the most urgent business prohibited him from attending. He was very active in the meetings of the Saginaw Special Conference, and attended as many meetings of his District as possible. He also attended the conventions of Synod as often as he was able to. When in 1874 the delegate system was inaugurated for the Synodical Conventions, he frequently was chosen as delegate from his District. He also served as delegate to the Synodical Conference conventions. Whenever he was asked to serve Synod on some board or other, he was always happy to take the added responsibility. Not infrequently was he asked to preach at conferences and conventions. He preached on every phase of Christian doctrine whenever he was called upon to preach at conventions, though mission sermons seemed to be his favorite. Notable among these was the one at the Northern District Convention of 1858, where he preached on Romans 10, 9-20. In this sermon he answered the question, "Why should we make it a matter of conscience to send out messengers of

8. Northern District Report, 1876, p. 14.

9. Der Lutheraner, vol. 36, p. 130 ff., vol. 46, p. 51, vol. 47, p. 105.

the Gospel to the heathen?" His divisions were: 1) for God's sake; 2) for the heathens' sake; 3) for our own sake.¹⁰

Sievers considered the call for help from the brethren as important as a call from God, and denied himself comforts in order to help out, whether this was a mission trip to a distant settlement or a call for help from a neighboring congregation where his mature judgment was needed. He was often asked to serve as secretary and his reports still show how well and to the point he wrote them; the Northern District report of 1865 is proof of his accuracy and skill. Already in his early life he held Synodical offices. He was asked at the convention of 1849, the first one he attended, to call upon the scattered Lutherans in Michigan.¹¹ At this same convention he was appointed with Pastors A. Craemer and J.H.P. Graebner to take care of the transferring of the Shiboyank mission station, in the name of Synod, and with the mission commission of Ann Arbor, Michigan.¹² Two years later he became president of the Board for Heathen Missions. He served in this capacity until the convention of 1893, when the board was re-organized. He served on this re-organized board until his death.

10. Northern District Report, 1858, p. 6.
11. Sievers to Loehe July 31, 1849.
12. Der Lutheraner, vol. 6, p. 11.

For many years he served as secretary of the Electoral College of Synod, being a member of that board from 1851 to 1874.

The relations between the Wisconsin and Missouri Synods before 1868 were not very cordial; however, the Wisconsin Synod in June 1868 resolved to take steps leading to closer and friendlier relations between the two Synods. These steps were taken and agreement was reached. The two Synods met on October 21-22, 1868 in Milwaukee. Sievers, together with President Walther, Prof. Brauer, Pastors Lochner and Strassen represented the Missouri Synod. The Wisconsin Synod was represented by President Bading, Prof. Hoenecke, Pastors Koehler, Dammann, and Gausewitz. No doubt Sievers also took an active part in the discussion of the doctrines of the church and ministry, ordination, inspiration, the proper place of the Symbolical Books, millenium, and the anti-Christ. Unity was achieved on all points.¹³

In 1870 he was appointed by C.F.W. Walther as a member of the committee to colloquize Pastor Spindler, who asked to be admitted into Synod.¹⁴

13. Ibid., vol. 25, p. 37.

14. L. Fuerbringer, Briefe von C.F.W. Walther an seine Freunde, Synodal-genossen und Familienglieder, herausgegeben von, zweiter Band. Briefe aus den Jahren 1865-1871, p. 206.

Sievers served Synod as chronologist for eighteen years, from 1872 to 1890. This task he also carried out accurately and judiciously.

He was not only active in the work of the general body, but also took part in the proceedings of his own District. From 1875 to 1879 he was vice-president of the Northern District, and with the growing work of the presidency, some of the duties of that office were placed upon him. He carried out these duties conscientiously.¹⁵ After that he was assisting Pastor J. Schmidt in that office, and so the Kalender of 1882 listed him as vice-president of the District. However, Sievers corrected this error and publicized the fact that he had only been assisting.¹⁶

Sievers served as Visitor in his District from 1872 to 1877, and again from 1879 to 1882. During these years he made many visits into his visitorial district and often was called upon to settle disputes. In all of these cases he used the Word of God as the basis of decision.

Not only did he spend the greater part of his life serving as president on Synod's Board for Heathen Missions,

15. In 1879 he begged the District not to re-elect him because of his old age. Northern District Report, 1879, p. 26.

16. Der Lutheraner, vol. 38, p. 6.

but he also instilled this same zeal for missions in his District by serving on the District Board of Missions. He served in this capacity from 1882 to 1891. During these years he saw to it that many young congregations received the much needed support and that many others were organized. During the many years in which he served as secretary to the Michigan Pastoral Conference, he always offered helpful advice to the brethren as to how they could best reach the place of meeting.

In 1858 he was nominated to the Director- and Professorship of the Teachers' Seminary of Fort Wayne. Pastors P. Fleischmann and R. Lange had also been nominated.¹⁷ However, Sievers as secretary of the Electoral Board, announced a few months later that Pastor Philip Fleischmann had been unanimously elected to that position.¹⁸

In the preceding chapters we have seen what an invaluable pioneer, pastor, and missionary G.E.C.F. Sievers was; on the basis of this chapter we must conclude that he was also a faithful servant of Synod and an invaluable member of Synod. It is hard to understand how a man with such varied duties and far-flung activities could take care of his projects so excellently and efficiently.

17. Ibid., vol. 14, p. 111 ff.

18. Ibid., p. 168.

CHAPTER V

THE HUSBAND AND FATHER

When Sievers was teaching in the home of Bergrath Koch in Germany we may presume that he fell in love with his daughter Caroline, for when he had immigrated to America and had organized the colony of Frankenlust, we read of correspondence between Bergrath Koch and Sievers in which he asked for the daughter in marriage. In the spring of 1850 Sievers had received the answer in the affirmative from both the father and the daughter. In one of his letters to Sievers, Bergrath Koch said that he was planning to leave for America to accompany his daughter to this country. Sievers was asked to meet them in New York. It so happened that he had been asked to investigate the mission possibilities in Cincinnati at this time. Hurriedly he took care of his duties, and had only a few weeks' time to meet his bride in New York. He had planned to reach Saginaw on the day he left Frankenlust. From Saginaw he hoped to travel via stage coach. He left for New York in April 1850. On his way to Saginaw, Sievers, in the excitement and haste to meet his bride, lost his way along the path which he had so often traveled. He stumbled about in the darkness, and finally, after ten hours, reached Saginaw. After that things

went along smoothly and he reached New York safely.¹

In accordance with the wishes of his bride, and with money furnished by his father-in-law, Sievers had earlier already built a solid frame house. It was quite a sacrifice that Caroline Koch made, giving up luxury and comfort in Germany in exchange for a home in the wilderness of America. Since she was a girl of means, practical-minded Sievers wrote to Loehe that he hoped to use some of her money in the support of immigration.²

Having arrived safely in New York, and having met the incoming immigrants and his bride, Caroline Wilhelmine Auguste Koch, Sievers was married on May 5, 1850, in Trinity Church, New York, by Pastor T.J. Brohm. Soon after the ceremony they returned to Frankenlust, where they arrived on Pentecost. The father-in-law followed the young couple later and remained with them for about half a year.

Their family life was indeed a happy one. They were blessed with eleven children, but three of them had died in infancy. In the spring of 1858 Sievers wrote Loehe that his whole family had been richly blessed, though the oldest and youngest sons had died, the youngest only

1. All information in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, is taken from Der Lutheraner, vol. 51, p. 129 ff. and 147 ff.

2. Letter written by Sievers to Loehe April 18, 1849. Copy in C.H.I. archives.

a quarter of a year ago. This thought still saddened the parents considerably. He wrote, "My wife and I are, praise God, blessed married people and parents. We are to a great extent living for the bringing up of our children. Our mother in Hannover is planning to visit us in about a year and a half."³ On January 24, 1859 he wrote to Loehe that a son had been born to him in March 1858. By that time he had four living children, three sons and one daughter. The family circle was a source of great joy and relaxation to the parents, especially when the father's duties became strenuous. Sievers was also deeply concerned about their education. Besides teaching them the Way of Life, he also instructed them in the German and English languages. As soon as they were able to read German, and at times even before they knew German well, he taught them the English language so that they would become useful citizens. Without knowledge of English, Sievers felt they would not be able to get along in the new fatherland. This certainly showed great farsightedness, especially when we compare this attitude towards the English language with that of so many of the later German immigrants who wanted their children to remain German as long as the grass remained green. Sievers' children were taught German by the parochial school teacher, Jacob Brater, who lived in the parsonage for five years.

3. Kirchliche Mittheilungen, Nos. 5 and 6, col. 47.

Not far from the parochial school was an English school. Sievers had been elected director of this school, Andreas Goetz moderator, and teacher Brater treasurer. Since Sievers was director, it was his duty to hire the teachers for the school. In 1859 he employed an American, a certain Mr. Sayles, who was also living with Sievers in the parsonage. Sievers termed this 23 year-old man "an excellent teacher and boarder."⁴ Again we see what an active part Sievers took in projects that went on around him, even in maintaining an English school.

His children were Friedrich, Bernhard, Johanna, Ferdinand, Agnes, Siegesmund, Carolina, and Gottlieb. About ten years before his death, the parents adopted an abandoned child by the name of Renata. At the time of his death four of his five sons were in the ministry to carry on the traditions of the father. Ferdinand, Jr. served a congregation in West Bay City, Michigan, Friedrich in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Gottlieb in Roseland, Cook County, Illinois, and Bernhard in Milwaukee.⁵ Sievers was deeply attached to his family. Often when on his missionary journeys, he wrote them kind personal letters and enclosed souvenirs, as for instance, flowers from the upper Mississippi region. He was a great lover

4. Ibid., 1859, Nos. 2 and 3, col. 20 ff.

5. Amerikanischer Kalender fuer deutsche Lutheraner, 1893, nach der Geburt unsers Herrn Jesu Christi.

of children and knew how to interest and entertain them. Often he would break away from his heavy schedule and play with the children. The evenings were usually devoted to his family. After supper and evening devotion the family would gather around the father, who would read to them and hold discussions.

Sievers arose early in the morning, usually around four or five o'clock, when he awakened the family by playing hymns on the piano. The family arose at that time and gathered around their father for morning devotion. The whole family circle was pervaded with the Holy Spirit. The parsonage was known for its hospitality in the country round about. Not only brethren in the faith, but also outsiders were frequently taken in. Speaking of these early years, his neighbor, J.H.P. Graebner, tells the following incident: "I shall never forget the first pastoral conference which was held at the home of Pastor Sievers when he was still single. At night the entire conference retired to rest upon one long spread of straw. In one of his rooms Sievers had caused wheat straw to be spread upon the floor. Upon this, linen cloths had been laid and a pillow for each. We covered ourselves with linen cloths, and all enjoyed a restful sleep. I was indeed tired enough, having made

afoot that same day the twenty miles to Frankenlust."⁶

Sievers had a strong constitution; with the exception of sickness in his early years and again in his sixties, he was in good health. Even in times of sickness he did not complain. In the spring of 1890 he had a severe attack of influenza; after a few weeks, however, he was able to resume his congregational duties. Around this time J.H.P. Graebner wrote, "with good old Pastor Sievers one can still feel as much at home as forty years ago."⁷

In the winter of 1893 Sievers noticed that he could no longer take the usual food. He blamed his age for it and did not believe that he was not well. By spring he had weakened to some extent, and so he notified his son-in-law, Gustavus Fuerbringer, a prominent physician in Saginaw, Michigan. By his birthday on May 18th he had improved considerably. Though he had followed the doctor's orders closely in every other respect, he did not cut down on his congregational activities. It happened that many children of the congregation were sick with scarlet fever at this time. In his own weakened

6. Translated by Dr. Theo. Graebner in his Church Bells, op. cit., p. 55, from the manuscript written by J.H.P. Graebner, op. cit., p. 49.

7. J.H.P. Graebner, op. cit., p. 48.

condition he visited them regularly, though he had been begged to cut down on his work. The medicine had taken its effect and he grew stronger again. Later on, however, his liver disease became worse. He was still able to attend the Saginaw Special Conference held on August 1-2, 1893. At this conference, however, he was forced to resign from his duties because of his declining health. He resigned only after many inward struggles, since his love for the church compelled him to keep on working. During the end of August he spent much of his time lying on the sofa, only occasionally working at his desk. The visits of his children and grandchildren quickened him and made him very happy.

In the early part of September he became still weaker and so on September 7th, a few days before his death, he celebrated Holy Communion with his family, which was administered by two of his sons. Though his physical condition was very weak, he rallied at times. When the neighboring pastors visited him on the afternoon of the 7th, he very enthusiastically discussed his favorite subject with them - mission work. He waxed so eloquently in this discussion that those who saw him thought his physical condition had greatly improved. On the evening of the 7th he asked to pray with his family. The words of this prayer, written down by one of his sons, are

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as follows:

"O Lord, my God, accept this prayer which I am offering up to Thee with a few words in my weakness. I thank and praise Thee that Thou hast sought me out, found me and blessed me, and for every blessing Thou hast heaped upon me and my family, both in joy and sadness. I stand before Thee, poor and wretched, naked and bare, and clothe myself in Thy mercy. Not my own works, O Lord, but Thine, do I lift up in the sure confidence that my sins are forgiven through Christ's blood. Preserve my life as long as it pleaseth Thee; guard my dear ones, comfort them in suffering, tribulation, and all afflictions, and keep them in the trueness of faith. Protect all Christianity and this Thy congregation with Thy grace and faithfulness. Strengthen the sick, the troubled and the dying. Have mercy on the heathen and look after them, so that they may know Thee as their Savior and may be saved with us. Especially give me grace and lead me out of this vale of tears into eternal life. Amen."

On September 8th he suffered a great deal, though he was very patient. In the afternoon he pleaded, "My God, take me home to Thee soon." Later in the afternoon he took part in devotion, but in the evening his end became apparent. His family and members of the congregation had read sections of Scripture to him, to which he had responded. By ten o'clock it was doubtful whether he was still conscious. His last words were, "My Savior!" after which his breathing became very heavy. He died at 12:45 in the morning of September 9th. The church bells pealed the news of his death to the congregation during the night and again at six o'clock in the morning. The following day, which was a Sunday, the service was conducted by Cantor Himmler, who read one of Dr. Walther's sermons. After the service, the congregation met and

decided to pay for all the funeral expenses.⁸

The funeral, which was attended by hundreds of people from the Saginaw Valley, took place on September 12th. Pastor J.T. Mueller preached the sermon in the home. Pastor J.H.P. Graebner spoke from the sacristy steps before the procession moved to the cemetery. Pastor Joseph Schmidt of Saginaw delivered a short sermon at the grave. The congregation then assembled in the church for a memorial service, where Pastor J.H.P. Partenfelder of Bay City preached. Pastor Schmidt said of him, "Though the body seemed infirm, it was ruled with an iron will." He further commented that Sievers considered himself a householder over the goods put in his trust. He always gave freely of his earthly possessions; he never was selfish, and spent himself wherever he went. His grave is marked with the words found in Dan. 12, 3: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

In summing up the life of Ferdinand Sievers, we can

8. St. Paul's Congregation in Frankenlust first called Bernhard Sievers of Milwaukee as his father's successor; when he did not accept Ferdinand Sievers, Jr. was called. He also did not accept. Then Pastor H. Speckhard was called, but he, too, declined. Finally Pastor J.J. Trinklein of Sioux City, Iowa was called. He accepted the call and was installed on December 10, 1893 by Pastor Sievers. Trinklein, op. cit., p. 42.

not help but admit that he was a good influence on all of his undertakings. He helped to sustain the mission work among the American Indians, and was the father of many congregations, always keeping in mind the words of his Lord and Master, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Ferdinand Sievers had a living, burning zeal to do mission work, both in the home and in the foreign field. No obstacle was insurmountable for him; no lukewarmness on the part of the brethren in doing mission work could cool his zeal. He was convinced that the Lord's command to bring the Gospel to the heathen was meant for each individual. He spent his entire life in preaching the Gospel, and in convincing people of their high calling and duty. He never was concerned about the physical strength or the money involved in doing mission work; no, he recognized the command of God, and spent himself in fulfilling it, freely trusting in Him to furnish the ways and means.

While it is true that the Missouri Synod was concerned about doing mission work among the immigrants, the Jews, and the Negroes of this country, it was very slow in beginning work among the inhabitants of foreign countries. To G.E.C.F. Sievers belongs the credit of finally getting Synod organized so it could do mission

work in foreign countries also. It was through the persistent efforts of Ferdinand Sievers that the Missouri Synod finally began foreign mission work.

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